NUN TEODOSIA – ZORICA LAȚCU

A UNIVERSITY SCHOLAR IN THE COMMUNIST PRISON

Ionel ENE*

Abstract: Born during WW I, on March 17, 1917, in a family of people from Ardeal, refugees in Hungary, Sister Teodosia – Zorica Lațcu left her mark both on the history of culture and on the Romanian Orthodox Church. If, within Romanian culture, she was known for her religious poetry and her translations of texts from the Holy Fathers, the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church records her pious example of Christian life and especially her courage to confess Christ in front of communist investigators. She graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Cluj, majoring in classical philology and minoring in French language and literature, and, after graduation, she became a professor, being the main junior teaching assistant at the Romanian Linguistic Institute in Cluj during 1940-1948, when she became a nun at the Vladimirești monastery, near Tudor Vladimirescu village in the Galați county. She was arrested on March 28, 1955, and imprisoned at the Penitentiary in Galați. During the investigations and incarceration, she gave the proof of an authentic Christian life. She endured being incarcerated, but not without serious consequences to her health. For some years (1960-1970), she lived in Gurguiesti, then in Brașov, until the events of December 1989. During the first days of 1990, she went back to the convent in Vladimirești, which had been deserted since 1956. On August 8, 1990, she began her journey into eternity, being buried within the monastery on August 11. Several of her poetry volumes were published posthumously.

Keywords: *monk, priest, prison, inquiry, confessor*

* PhD Professor, “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galati (Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology), Galați, Romania.

Introduction:

2017 has been established by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church (hereinafter ROC) as “The homage year of icon and church painters and the Commemorative year of Patriarch Justinian and the defenders of Orthodoxy during communism” within the Romanian Patriarchy. It is, in fact, an invitation first addressed to all Romanian Christians to re-discover the beauty and the importance of the icon in public eyes and their own spiritual life, but, at the same time, it is the manifestation of the desire to be aware and cherish the recent past of our Church. There have been studies written on icon and church painters. However, the personality of Patriarch Justinian will only be fully known when we have managed to outline the whole picture of the Church, and not only his effort to find a *modus vivendi* when faced with an atheistic dictatorship. A tree does not only mean what is visible! Without the root and the fruit hidden in its own flowers, it could be a log, but not a tree! The same holds valid for patriarch Justinian! In order to understand and know him, we need exhaustive research and systematic display of the entire experience of being a priest, with all the problems of the political system of his time. The experience of the Russian Church and of Patriarch Tihon, as well as that of tens of thousands of priests killed by the Bolsheviks, was well-known worldwide. It was only Patriarch Justinian’s wisdom that made sure that the Romanian Orthodox Church survived and that it avoided sharing the fate of the Russian or, even worse, the Albanian Church. The number of people who suffered in Romania during communism is impressive, but much smaller than the number of people killed in the Soviet Union. Patriarch Justinian took the risk upon himself and provided shelter to all those persecuted by the communists, especially those who had been released from prison. Irrespective of what has been or will be written, we must confess that in the 20th century the Romanian Orthodox Church once again proved that the Christian martyr’s calling is not an abstract notion, but a living reality. To this end, we have proof of the tortures endured in communist prisons! We must not forget that a martyr’s calling is not exclusively restricted to giving up one’s life for Christ, but to taking upon oneself the whole burden, the challenges of the contemporary world, to preserving the identity and accuracy of faith.

Christianity is the most beautiful way of living. It is an invitation to a love partnership with God. It is the greatest dignity to which man can have access. Yet, let us not forget that the love partnership with God is rendered valid by means of just as many love partnerships as people we meet during our lifetime. St. John Evangelist states very clearly: "If somebody says: I love God, but he hates his brother: he is a liar! Because he who does not love his brother, whom he can see, he cannot love God, Whom he cannot see" (I John, IV, 20). We strongly believe that all who experienced life in the communist prisons provided the clearest testimony of love for their fellow-men, for the Church and for the ancient faith!

1. Zorica Lațcu – Biographical Notes

We feel honoured to attest, this commemorative year, to the life of a nun who would have been a century old, had she still walked among the living: Zorica Lațcu, the nun Teodosia, ephemeral resident of Vladimirești monastery, and former university scholar at the Babeș Bolyai University of Cluj.

Born during WW I, on March 17, 1917, in a family of people from Ardeal, refugees in Hungary, Sister Teodosia – Zorica Lațcu left her mark both on the history of culture and on the Romanian Orthodox Church. If, within Romanian culture, she was known for her religious poetry and her translations of texts from the Holy Fathers, the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church records her pious example of Christian life and especially her courage to confess Christ in front of communist investigators. After the end of WW I, the Lațcus came back to Brasov, where Zorica attended grammar school and high school, after which she migrated to Cluj in 1936 to go to university. In 1936-1940, she attended the Faculty of Philology in Cluj, majoring in classical philology and minoring in French language and literature, and, after graduation, she became a professor, being the main junior teaching assistant at the Romanian Linguistic Institute in Cluj until 1948. She stands out due to a remarkable research activity, being part of the team who wrote the *Dictionary of the Romanian Language*, published by the Romanian Academy. She also drew up "the bibliography for the *Dacian-Romanian*

Revue and for the *Bulletin of the Linguistic Institute*”¹. At this time, she published her first poems and made her debut in the *Gândirea / The Thinking* revue, with the poem “Epitafuri antice” / “Ancient Epitaphs”². In *Gândirea / The Thinking*, she will publish other poems as well. In 1944, her first poetry volume was published, *Insula Albă / White Island*³. Two more volumes of poems, *Osana Luminii / Hosanna to the Light*⁴ and *Poeemele Iubirii / Poems of Love*⁵ were printed, establishing her place in Romanian literature, along other religious writers and poets. Mention must also be made of the fact that, during her university years and while she was part of the academic milieu, Zorica Lațcu grew fond of the Brâncoveanu - Sâmbăta de Sus monastery, where there were three great confessors, priest Serafim Popescu, priest Arsenie Boca and priest Teofil Părăianu, and her connection to the Bishop of Cluj at that time, Nicolae Colan, substantially contributed to her decision to become a nun.

That is the reason why, about 1948, she became a nun at the Vladimirești monastery, near Tudor Vladimirescu village in the Galați county. Here she fulfilled several duties, eventually becoming librarian of the monastery. The personality of Father Ioan Iovan accomplished the work already begun in her soul by the great spiritual personalities of Ardeal. Unfortunately, in full spiritual evolution, everything took a turn for the worse, as she was arrested on March 28, at the beginning of 1955, being imprisoned at the Penitentiary in Galați. During the investigations and incarceration, she gave the proof of an authentic Christian life.

The martyr calling of Sister Teodosia is clearly expressed in the poem *Măiastră suferință / Magical Suffering*⁶ and not only there, but it is clearly depicted in her behavior when faced with the investigators.

2. Biographical Details in the Inquiry Notes

Before dwelling upon Sister Teodosia’s resistance against

¹ Zorica LAȚCU – Teodosia, *Poezii* (Poems), Bucharest, Sofia Publishing House, 2008.

The book was printed with the blessing of His Eminence Galaction, the bishop of Alexandria and Teleorman, with a *Foreword* by archimandrite Teofil Părăian, p. 5.

² *Gândirea / The Thinking*, year XX, nr. 8/1941, 429.

³ Zorica LAȚCU, *Insula Albă*, Sibiu, Dacia Traiană, 1944.

⁴ *Osana Luminii*, Cluj, Episcopia Cluj, 1948.

⁵ Zorica LAȚCU, *Poeemele Iubirii*, Craiova, Ramuri, 1949.

⁶ Teodosia (Zorica) LAȚCU, *Ție Doamne, îți voi cânta (To You, Lord, I shall sing)*, p. 18.

investigators and her affection for the ancient faith, we feel it is our duty to set some things straight concerning her incarceration time. In 2008, Sofia publishing house issued the *Poetry* book of nun Teodosia Lațcu⁷. The *Biographical Coordinates* section also records that, besides many events in her life, “in 1956, Sister Teodosia was arrested for 3 years”⁸. In the book *To You, Lord, I will sing my praise*, in *Note on this edition*, we can read the following:

“in 1948, she became a nun at the Vladimirești monastery, near Tecuci, being given the name Teodosia. But she could only live there until 1956, when the monastery was closed, some of the nuns being arrested, and the others being forced to give up nunnery. Teodosia was among the ones arrested, serving a three-year sentence in a penitentiary in Miercurea Ciuc”⁹.

Sister Teodosia was actually arrested on March 28, 1955, although the arrest warrant is dated May 11, 1955¹⁰ and she was admitted into the Penitentiary in Galați. She was transferred to the penitentiary at the Văcărești monastery, where her health deteriorated, without any known causes, although prolonged investigations might be taken into account. At the end of March 1956, she was admitted to Central Hospital no. 9,¹¹ called at that time the “Prof. Dr. Gh. Marinescu” Hospital. On May 18, 1956, following a medical investigation, by the 1903 notice, the Hospital informed the Military Court in Constanța that “Lațcu Zorica Teodosia ... was suffering from chronic chorea. This illness causes psychotic disorders such as: diminished judgement, mental instability, nervousness, etc.”¹². On July 7, 1956, Sister Teodosia was still incarcerated at the Văcărești Penitentiary¹³, although a *transfer warrant* had been issued by

⁷ Zorica LAȚCU – Teodosia, *Poezii*.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

⁹ Teodosia (Zorica) LAȚCU, *Ție Doamne, îți voi cânta / To You, Lord, I shall sing*, p. 11.

¹⁰ CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *File P 019595*, vol. XIII, p. 22.

¹¹ IDEM, vol. XII, p. 134. We believe that she was admitted as early as March 27, cf. Idem, p. 135 și 140.

¹² CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *File P 019595*, vol. XII, p. 133.

¹³ IDEM, vol. XII, p. 129.

the Constanța Penitentiary on April 26, 1956¹⁴. She was transferred to the Constanța Penitentiary, where, on August 9, 1956, the Military Court decided to release her, on account of her health issues. The final release sentence was issued by the Military Court of the 2nd Region on June 7, 1957¹⁵. During the trial she was defended by her lawyer, Mocanu Constantin, and she was tried for *the offence of disseminating prohibited publications*¹⁶, although she had initially been arrested for *public disorder*¹⁷.

The inquiry notes reveal some biographical novelties, besides those mentioned by the people who posthumously edited Sister Teodosia's work. Thus, her father, Ioan Lațcu, was a lawyer, but, at the moment of her arrest, he was a *manual labourer*. Her mother, Cornelia, née Moșoiu, was a housewife. They were from Brașov, where Ioan Lațcu had two houses. The family had to take refuge in Hungary during WW I, and that is where Sister Teodosia was born. The Lațcus had two daughters, Zorica, the future Sister Teodosia, and Cornelia, who was married to engineer Cionca Ovidiu, who was also from Brașov. Out of the archive notes, we found out that no member of the Lațcu family had ever been involved in politics. We must also note the fact that Sister Teodosia's last name was Lațcu, not Lațcu, as it was used after her death and as it appears in the works published after 1989.

3. The Incarceration and Inquiries to which the nun Teodosia was Subjected

I would like to state that for us today it is very easy to draw up an inventory of the archive documents and a chronologically logical and thematic order of the events that Sister Teodosia witnessed and experienced, influencing some of them or being influenced by others. What we manage to render is far from portraying the entire ordeal of her experiences! The complete portrayal of the late Sister Teodosia – Zorica Lațcu can only be made by He who called her to Him. To us, the minutes

¹⁴ IDEM, vol. XII, p. 137.

¹⁵ IDEM, p. 200 v. The sentence has a copy in the *File P. 19595*, vol. IX, p. 21 and specifies *the amnesty ... and the end of penal prosecution*.

¹⁶ IDEM, p. 213.

¹⁷ IDEM, vol. XIII, p. 22.

of the questioning sessions remain of vital importance. They reveal a totally unexpected world, where man is depersonalized, his word bearing no weight in front of the investigator. On the contrary, the artifice of the snake in Eden may be grasped in every inquiry, or, even sadder, we see man against man, as if upholding the words of philosopher Thomas Hobbes: *Homo hominis lupus est!*

The inquiries took place during the first part of Sister Teodosia's incarceration and lasted from 40 minutes to 8 hours. Although imprisoned since the end of March 1955, the first inquiry occurred on April 6, when the investigator became familiar with the details of her identity, family, and education, as well as positions held, and how she entered the convent¹⁸. The minutes of the questioning session on April 7 only records the hour when it started, but mention must be made of the fact that Sister Teodosia stood remarkably firm when faced with the prosecutor, no matter what method he chose to draw her towards the end he so desired. The prosecutor's threat: "*you are warned to be honest and to tell the truth*" got a firm and square answer: "*I know nobody at the monastery in Tudor Vladimirescu, absolutely nobody who could have been involved in legionary activity*"¹⁹. On seeing that he cannot get anything out of the nun, the investigator changed tactics and particularly wanted to know if there were people who left the monastery. The answer was equally prompt: "*yes, but with permission – being delegated to do so*".

4. People under Secret Police / Securitate surveillance, depicted in inquiries on Sister Teodosia

We cannot and we do not set out to record the great number of people surveilled by the Secret Police (Securitate) and noted in the minutes of inquiries on Sister Teodosia. Yet, we will mention the well-known ones, sometimes providing some details revealing both the ploy and mean nature of the investigators and the gentleness and resistance of Sister Teodosia. Special mention must be made that priest Mureșan Florea in Cluj, physician Neagu Petrea, in the same city, Father Nil – Nichifor Dorobanțu at Tarnița monastery, Father Gherasim Pascal at Vladimirești

¹⁸ CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *File P 019595*, vol. VIII, p. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

monastery, Bishop Valerian Zaharia of Oradea, as well as Father Ioan Iovan were the people that the prosecutor wanted to learn about from Sister Teodosia. Regular Christians were not absent, though, from the investigator's concerns, but Sister Teodosia had only words of praise to describe them, specifying that "I have never had talks against the regime of the People's Republic of Romania (hereinafter PRR) with any of the people mentioned above, as I have never even been interested in discussing such things"²⁰.

It is important to mention the fact that, from the lines written by the investigator, we find out about the special spiritual connection that Sister Teodosia and Bishop Nicolae Colan shared. He was a former bishop of Cluj (1936-1957) and then Metropolitan of Ardeal (1957-1967), and an active member of the Romanian Academy. Thus, during the questioning on April 11, 1955, a session which began at 12:30 a.m. and lasted until 8:30 p.m., the investigator wanted to know who priest Florea Mureșanu was, under what circumstances they had met and everything that she knew about him. The nun's answer also reveals her spiritual connection to the bishop of Cluj in the years after the war. Here is what the nun declared, among other things:

"I met priest Mureșanu Florea under the following circumstances: in the fall of 1946, when I was in Cluj and I was a junior teaching assistant at the University in this city, I used to go almost daily to bishop Colan Nicolae's house, because it was with his help that I managed to have my religious verses published at the bishopry's publishing house, to discuss and determine the form and number of volumes to be published. One day, in the house of Nicolae Colan in Cluj, he introduced priest Mureșanu Florea to me. I know that he had been a professor at the Theological Academy in Cluj and archpriest of Cluj... His wife, namely Eugenia, told me somewhere in 1946-1948, I have no exact recollection of the moment, that priest Mureșanu Florea had been arrested by the Hungarian authorities during the ephemeral occupation of Ardeal..."²¹.

The information provided by Sister Teodosia during the questioning conducted by the prosecutor is vast and diverse. We record the fact that the investigator and his superiors did not trust the nun's

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 23 v.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 11 -11 v.

statements. On the contrary, they suspected her of ill-will, a fact recorded on the sheet of the second inquiry on May 9, when the nun had only respectful words for another inhabitant of Vladimirești, namely Sister Tiberiada, and, on the side of the questioning sheet, the following words were written: “she is lying through her teeth”²².

There were much longer questioning sessions, such as those concerning the situation of priest Ioan Iovan, the confessor of the monastery, and the information provided by the nun reveal a clearer and more profound awareness of the *Vladimirești phenomenon*. Thus, we find out that in July 1948, when the monastery priest was Gherasim Pascal, deacon Iovan Silviu came to the monastery, and he had been given the name of Ioan when entering monastery life. The arrival of Father Ioan marked a remarkable spiritual revival of the area, the number of livestock grew considerably, and so did the number of believers who attended the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and holidays. Under the given circumstances, the growing piety of believers and the desire to confess more often generated a form of mass-confession. The practice of mass confession and daily communion, first of the monks and nuns, then of believers, was happening in other monasteries as well. In this respect, Sister Teodosia indicated Sâmbăta, Sihastru, Tarnița and Slatina monasteries, but this only took place there on the monastery’s titular saint day²³. As a consequence of this approach to confession and communion, the number of believers grew considerably²⁴, the investigator recorded, after having interrogated Sister Teodosia. But mention is also made of the consequences for priest Ioan Iovan:

“... in May 1954 he was called to the Patriarchy, where he was summoned to come with the new priest who had been assigned by the Patriarchy, but he refused to go, having the full support of the monastery

²² *Ibidem*, p. 35 v.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 35 and the following pages, these realities were known to sister Teodosia from the stories of Father Cleopa, prior at Slatina, priest Justin Vasilescu, at Sâmbăta monastery and priest Calinic at Sihastru monastery.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 25. We find out that, in the beginning, there were about 1,000 believers, afterwards their number going up to 8-9,000. Another reason for the increase in the believers’ number was the way in which Father Ioan Iovan made use of Sister Veronica’s visions and the place where the monastery was built on, being *blessed by God*.

synod. Afterwards, he was called several times to the Patriarchy, but he never went, and, at the end of December 1954, priest Ioan was tried by the Superior Monastery Consistory in Bucharest and his defrock sentence was issued at the end of January 1955, I mention the fact that priest Ioan was also summoned for the trial but he refused to attend²⁵.

The inquiry notes or the minutes are original documents. We can reconstruct, with their help, the history of Romanians' resistance to communist pressure. If, at the time of the investigation, the information Sister Teodosia provided on priest Ioan Iovan had serious consequences for the monastery confessor, in time, they became the most eloquent testimonies of the resistance of a servant of the Holy Shrine against an atheistic regime. For example, the investigator's question:

“what did priest Ioan have to say about the Party and the government when teaching catechism to the synod?” Sister Teodosia provided the following answer: “Priest Ioan, when teaching catechism, instigated no actions against the state, saying that the Party and the government, being led by the communists, do not look well upon the development of religion and prohibit religious practice, as believers are tortured, arrested and laid off. He also used to say that Sâmbăta and Sihastru monasteries had been closed on government request because they were missionary monasteries, and that the state persecutes the church and priests that disseminate faith. He would tell us to be ready for sacrifice, as we should soon be called upon to confess Christ at the cost of our own lives, as what had already happened to Sâmbăta and Sihastru monasteries would happen to us as well, and it would be better for us to die together than be scattered all over the place. He urged us to stand together, as there would be nothing left to be done at that moment, that the state works in Satan and against faith in Christ. He stated that the bishops in the country could not exercise their profession and call people to faith, as the government and the Party took measures against them... He would slander the regime showing that was only the beginning of persecuting those who displayed their faith, but that this persecution of faith would be rendered harsher by the regime and would result in arrests and sentences for those who would display their

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 25 – 25 v. It is interesting to keep track of father Ioan's situation, as he refused to accept the decision of the Superior Monastery Consistory and continued to serve in church, considering *the defrocking as non-canonical and dictated by political reasons*.

faith, after which the churches will be disbanded.”²⁶

It is worth remarking that priest Ioan Iovan, in his sermons, did not directly attack or slander the state, the government, the labour party or the communists, so as to avoid being exposed as an instigator, but he resorted to words such as *the anti-christ, the devil, his disciples*, by means of which he made believers understand that he was talking about *the party, the government, the communists*²⁷, etc. Moreover, out of Sister Teodosia's evidence, we find out that the confessor of Vladimirești monastery “spoke against materialism and Marxist-Leninist ideas by preaching idealism, trying to convince believers that spiritual life is more important than material life, thus attacking communist ideas that lay at the foundation of dialectic materialism”.

The questioning session was exhausting, not so much because of the actual time it took and the late hour during which it was sometimes conducted, but because of psychological pressures inflicted on the investigated person. Thus, the investigator would use all sorts of methods to obtain the information desired. For example, on May 13, 1955, the prosecutor read to Sister Teodosia an excerpt from priest Ioan's statement, who was himself under investigation, only to see how she interpreted it. Here is the fragment quoted by the investigator, about which the nun was asked to express her opinion:

“Regarding the fight for peace, I would attack communists in sermons, showing that peace only came from God and peace agreements are signed in vain if, from the most important person in the country to the lowliest of men, they did not believe in God”. This time, Sister Teodosia stated that she did not remember priest Ioan saying that peace agreements are signed in vain²⁸.

One of the investigator's accusations against Sister Teodosia had to do with a memoir, submitted to the Patriarchy, in which she made an appeal against the sentence to defrock priest Ioan Iovan. The document included accusations against “Party and government representatives, arguing that they had forced the Patriarch to defrock priest Ioan and that

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 38 v-39.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, *Zorica Lațcu Teodosia*, p. 40-40v.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 40 v -41.

priest Ioan's defrocking was not decided for church reasons but for reasons of the state"²⁹. Obviously, the information provided by the minutes of the questioning sessions about Father Ioan Iovan is abundant and it outlines the portrait of the fearless fighter for preserving the right faith against the atheistic roll-down. We now know more about the sufferings of this confessor, due to the memoirs of the righteous Metropolitan Antonie of Ardeal (+2005). The torture that he was subjected to during his incarceration will only be known to God and his soul, as Metropolitan Antonie confessed that he was beaten with a wet rope for an entire day just to say something bad about him, but he refused, preferring the suffering.

Although we will not be able to display much of the information provided by Sister Teodosia during her investigation, we shall dwell on an episode concerning Father Nichifor - Nil Dorobanțu, whom I personally met, while a student at the Seminar. It was Monday night during Passion Week, 1973. I was singing in the choir loft of St. Gheorghe Nord church in the city of Focșani, where the righteous priest Dumbravă Gheorghe (1907-1989) performed religious services. When the evening service during Passion Week ended, a thin monk, with a hood over his head, entered the Holy Shrine, greeted the father and stayed there, making his own praying rule. I lingered on for a while, hoping that he would stand up and leave with us. To my surprise, Father Dumbravă invited me to accompany him, as it was the custom, and we left the church, leaving the guest inside the Holy Shrine. I did not dare back then to ask Father Gheorghe who the *pilgrim monk* was. The following day, as I was supposed to, I came back to the church at 6 a.m. and I discovered that our guest had not left yet. After exchanging some kind words with Father Gheorghe, he took his leave and, sneaking among believers that had started gathering, he went out as discreetly as he had come in! This was the monk of whom the Secret Police (Securitatea) were so interested in 1955. Sister Teodosia, being under investigation, gave this evidence:

"I know from a nun at the convent that he was the son of a general and that he was the priest at Tarnița monastery. She also told me that, while she was at the Roman bishopry, she cooked a meal for the bishop and other people, but Nichifor Dorobanțu called in poor people and they were

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

the ones to eat. For this he was punished, but I do not know exactly how”³⁰.

I was to find out years later that Father Nil had been the confessor of Tarnița monastery and he had left his mark on that little piece of Heaven on the Odobești hills. People mention his name with piety to this day!

5. The Accusation Against Sister Teodosia

As to the accusation against Sister Teodosia, mention must be made that there was one accusation when she was arrested and another when she was released. *Public disorder* was the accusation formulated by the military prosecutor, by means of the arrest warrant no. 635 on May 11, 1955, although she had been detained as early as March 28, the same year³¹. During the trial, the accusation recorded was that of “disseminating prohibited publication”,³² for which she was actually released. The real accusation that can be formulated against Sister Teodosia is that she dared contest an intrusion of political power in the life of the Church and, particularly, to sentence a priest who was much too popular and who was considered mystical, in a world that aimed at being *new, formed according to the Soviet communist model*. Sister Teodosia’s courage to unveil this injustice inflicted on a worthy servant of the Holy Shrine brought upon her years of incarceration, deprivation of freedom and all the torments to which she was subjected during imprisonment.

6. The Time after Incarceration

She endured being incarcerated, but not without serious consequences to her health. From 1960 to 1970, she was forced to live in Gurguiști, near Brăila³³, with sister Mihaela, a former fellow in suffering and who had lived in Vladimirești as well. Although with forced residence and in quite poor health, Sister Teodosia never stopped writing verse during that time. Four poetry volumes remain published in the Astra

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

³² *Ibidem*, vol. IX, p. 200 v.

³³ Ioan – Lucian RADU, “Notă asupra ediției” / “Note on the edition”, in Sister Teodosia (Zorica) Lațcu, *Ție, Doamne, îți voi cânta / To You, Lord, I shall sing*, p. 11.

Library in Sibiu, which Father Teofil Părăianu³⁴ would later give testimony about, in the volume *Poems*, published posthumously at the Sofia publishing house.

For two decades (1970-1989), she came back and lived in Braşov, her original residence, continuing her writing activity and collaborating with Father Teodor Bodogae I “translating the patristic works; namely, Origen and St. Grigorie of Nyssa, translations published within the ‘Church Fathers and Writers’ collection at the Biblical Institute Publishing House”³⁵. She also translated from St. Isaac Sirul and St. Simeon the New Theologian³⁶, works which were published posthumously. At the beginning of 1990, as the monastery in Vladimireşti re-opened, she was among the first to live in the reconstructed convent. Unfortunately, being in ever poorer health, she concluded her earthly journey on August 8, 1990, and was buried in the monastery cemetery.

7. Commemoration on March 16, 2017

This year, on March 16, 2017, with the blessing of and in the presence of His Grace Casian, Archbishop of the Lower Danube, a memorial service was performed, on the anniversary of a century since Sister Teodosia was born and a conference was organized as *a spiritual meeting in memory of Sister Teodosia (Zorica Laţcu)*, the 3rd edition. Among the participants who took the floor, besides the local hierarch, His Grace Casian of the Lower Danube, we mention Prof. Dr. Virgil Nistru Țigănuş on *Canonul poeziei Maicii Teodosia Laţcu / The canon of Sister Teodosia Laţcu's poetry*; Prof. Dr. George Enache on *Vocaţia duhovnicească a Monahiei Teodosia Laţcu / Sister Teodosia Laţcu's spiritual calling*; priest Prof. Dr. Gheorghe Popa on *Omul poet al creaţiei lui Dumnezeu. Exemplul Maicii Teodosia Laţcu / Man as poet of God's creation. The example of Sister Teodosia Laţcu* and others. Some of her best poems were recited, poems that drew the attention of Christians, being arranged according to notes and sung within the denomination.

³⁴ See, Archimandrite Teofil PĂRĂIANU, Brâncoveanu monastery – Sâmbăta de sus / *Note on the edition*, in *Poezii / Poems*, p. 7.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

³⁶ See Ioan-Lucian RADU, *Notă asupra ediţiei / Note on the edition*, in vol. *Ție, Doamne, îți voi cânta / To You, Lord, I shall sing*, p. 12.

Far from outlining the tumult of her turmoil, abjections, disdain, sneers and troubles to which Sister Teodosia was subjected during incarceration, our lines are meant as a humble acknowledgement of one of our daughters who suffered on the Shrine of Faith. Her image will forever be etched in the memory of those who met her, her intellectual stature will only be revealed after having studied her entire work, but her words: “*I am dead. Christ lives within me, / My heart forever rejoices, / For angels perform never-ending mass, / Over my humble mat*”, are meant as a testament over time.

References

1. CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *Investigation File regarding: Lațcu Zorica, Constantinescu Costel and others*, P. 19595, vol. VIII.
2. CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *Investigation File regarding: Bogdan Marin, Iordache Manea, Andronache Ioan and others*, P. 19595, vol. IX.
3. CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *Investigation File regarding: Gurău Neculai, Diaconu Neculai and others*, P. 19595, vol. XII.
4. CNSAS / NCSSPA (The National Council for Studying Secret Police Archives) Archive, *Investigation File regarding: Moisi Virginia, Niculeț Dumitru, Aurică Elena, Diaconu Neculai and others*, P. 19595, vol. XIII.
5. LAȚCU, Zorica Teodosia, *Poezii / Poems*, Bucharest, Sofia Publishing House, 2008.
6. LAȚCU, Zorica – Teodosia, *Ție, Doamne, îți voi cânta / To You, Lord, I shall sing*, Iași, Doxologia Publishing House, 2013.