

**THE DACO-ROMAN SPIRITUALITY AS AN
ARGUMENT FOR ROMANIAN THEOLOGY,
PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE**

Rev. Lecturer IONIȚĂ APOSTOLACHE, PhD¹

The existence of a daco-roman Christianity in the carpato-danubiano-pontic areal is confirmed not only by the historians, but also by the Romanian theologians and philosophers. Inspired by the Scripture's letter and by the teachings of the Holy Fathers, most of them developed this link in the purpose of argumentation of a "Romanian dimension of the existence". From Nae Ionescu, Crainic, to Vulcănescu, Cioran, Țuțea, and then Ioan Gh. Savin, Dumitru Stăniloae, I.G. Coman or Nestor Vornicescu, the entire Romanian cultural elite makes a very important confession about the Christian foundation of the Romanian existence. With the help of a theological and spiritual heritage, therefore enforced by daco-roman specific, the work of these illuminated people of our nation determinates "the eternal Romanian icon of understanding the world", finishing in the end with the confessing of "a Romanian dimension of existence". In their kind of thinking, these "prophets of Romanian nation" "the skyline of Romanian world lays down from *ordinary* as far as *legend*, from *here* to *beyond*, from *presence* to *absence*, from *then* till *now*, from *now* as far as *eternity*, with an entire variety of Romanian modulation of nature, like Constantin Noica named them in his *Romanian Feeling of Essence*. And among these worlds, the passing through comes senseless, in an organic way; through a custom, but custom like place of passing through, not like a forbiddance, personally integrated in the existence like a step, not like threshold. All these words: *beyond*, *absence*, *eternity* are for the Romanian people qualities of his own nature".²

From his affirmation like unitary and independent state, Romania

¹ University of Craiova, Romania, Faculty of Theology, nutuapostolache@yahoo.com.

² MARIAN DIACONU, "An Ontological Model of Romanian Man", introductive study to the work of MIRCEA VULCĂNESCU, *Romanian Dimension of Existence*, Fundația Culturală Română Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991, p. 10.

grew in the eyes of Europe through a great richness of cultural values.³ Through an authentic interweaving between reason and spirit, the valuable inheritance of the history confirmed the natural essence of the Romanian people. What is very important for our research is the fact that at the basis of Great Romania the dialogue between theology and philosophy was in a symphonic concordance, generating true masterpieces of thinking and Romanian spirit. Therefore, we think that the daco-roman specific, on which is built our orthodox spirituality, can a *light-motive* for the Romanian cultural heritage.⁴

To bring an appropriate argumentation regarding this issue, the apologists of our daco-roman roots tried to get answers from the ethnogenesis process of our people.⁵ This aspect is very important for father Dumitru Stăniloae, offering therefore a prioritization of things. He believes that for an authentic understanding of our cultural and ethnical identity we must have in mind “the graft” on which this was created. Moreover, the Christianity has the purpose “to transport the humanity from the stage of wilderness of his natural nationality to the stage of nobility of the unique existence, grounded by God”.⁶ And once signed this seed “grows and bring hundredfold fruit”. Therefore, for father Dumitru Stăniloae the Christianity,

³ Before the communist period, Romanian philosophy developed on three cultural steps, compatible with three great generations of thinkers, who were very devoted to the confession work of the Church. Therefore, the first generation of philosophers stands before the start of the first Mondial war, having a very important contribution through many writhed works and having like representatives on: Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, P.P. Negulescu or Ion Petrovici. The second one had his manifestation in the next three decades after the first Mondial war, being dominated by some important names, like: Nae Ionescu, Lucian Blaga, D. D. Roșca, Mircea Florian, Tudor Vianu, Petre Andrei, Mircea Ralea. Last but not last, the third philosophical current had his beginning at the start of the second Mondial war, having like representatives on: Constantin Noica, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Mircea Vulcănescu, Petre Țuțea, Emil Cioran etc. (MARIAN DIACONU, “A Spiritual Face of his Time ...”, in MIRCEA VULCĂNESCU, *For a New Philosophical Spirituality. The Romanian Dimension of the Existence*, vol. I, forward by Constantin Noica, Eminescu Publishing Press, Bucharest, 1992, p. 11).

⁴ The specific of daco-roman Christianity, particularized through his important confession work of saints John Cassian, Dionysus Exiguul, John Maxanțiu etc., had always a very strong argument in the revindication of a “Romanian dimension of existence”. This is what father Dumitru Stăniloae names “Orthodoxy and Romanity”.

⁵ The Aurelian retreat from Dacia (271-275) was made gradually and did not include only the army, but also the administrative institutions and a part of politicians. The most part of the daco-roman population stayed in his initial place and therefore we believe could not have been moved so easily from his place (EMILIAN POPESCU, *Christianitas Daco-Romana. Florilegium studiorum*, Ed. Academiei Române, București, 1994, p. 43-44).

⁶ Rev. prof. DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, *Orthodoxy and Romaniansm*, Basilica Publishing House, Bucharest, 2014, p. 47.

in general, and the Orthodoxy, in particular, have meant to work and to be permanently present in “cultural manifestation, in work, in social relationships from the appropriate ethnical classes”.⁷

VI.1. The Historic Argument of Daco-roman Spirituality

One of the fundamental elements of a genesis process of the Romanian people is his Christianization. From this “grafting”, mentioned by father Dumitru Stăniloae, increased a liturgical language in connection with which we can speak about “a Romanian dimension of existence”. For a better understanding of this argument we must analyse the historical element. A very important thing is the approach of Saint Constantine the Great, which inserted in his politics the concept of *pax christiana*, especially for the barbarian nations.⁸ In our country, the Christianity brought by Saint Andrew the Apostle, became a priority in the missionary work of the 15th episcopal sieges across the north side of Danube.⁹

Furthermore, another very important aspect of daco-roman origin was the Latin language. In this concern, the historians invoke the principal formation of words and the grammatical structure, added in the original linguistic foundation of the Dacian people.¹⁰ Subsequent in this foundation were added also many Slave influence, received from the migratory people, starting with the VII and VIII centuries.¹¹ All these elements support themselves through the existence of a powerful Christian community, enforced in the period of the persecution, alive and present in the native element. Although there existed some theories which sustained some

⁷Rev. prof. DUMITRU STANILOAE, *Orthodoxy and Romanism*, p. 56.

⁸ Saint Constantine the Great concludes some kind of armistice in 322 with Goths, demanding them in the change of pace the unconditioned adhesion at the Christian belief (see: Evangelor Chrysos, *Byzantion kai oi Gotoi*, Tesseloniky, 1972). Moreover, the spread of Christianity through barbarians was a desideratum introduced by the Patriarch of Constantinople via 28 Canon from the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (see: CHARLS JOSEPH HEFELE, *A History of the Councils of the Church from the Original Documents*, p. 410-411).

⁹ EMILIAN POPESCU, *The Ecclesiastical Organization of Scythia Minor during 4th-6th centuries*, in Revista „Theological Studies”, nr. 7-10/1980, p. 590-605.

¹⁰ “The adoption of Latin Language by getae-daco-moesieni started in the first century d.Hr., from the establishment of the border of the Roman Empire on Danube. All this perimeter became the apanage of some restrictive circles. After the conquest of Dacia, Latin language entre in all social strata, being therefore the principal element of romanization of the natives. The attestations regarding the progress of the Latin language in the middle of autochthon population comes from the 3000 inscriptions which were founded in this area” (EMILIAN POPESCU, *Christianitas Daco-Romana ...*, p. 53).

¹¹ In this concerne, you can see the study of Prof. dr. MAGDA JIANU, *About names*, in “Metropolitan of Oltenia” Magazine, no. 1-4/2017, p. 97-109.

slimming of the daco-roman spirit under the influence of migratory people, from eighth century on the roots of Christianity from the areal of our country was very deep buried in the existence of our people, “being unable in no shape to be outdated through no further reading”.¹²

Starting from the linguistical heritage, the great historian Vasile Pârvan thinks that the daco-roman Christianity has an apologetical specific. In this context he invokes the term „*martur*” or „*martyr*”. Used in the Latin Illyricum, as a matter of fact in all the West of Europe, the term reflects very well the meaning of “*sufferance for the divine through*”. Therefore, it was very present on a numerous inscriptions and epigraphic texts, this term expresses in Pârvan’s opinion the martirical vocation of the Christian Church from here. “In all the important cities from Dalmatia and Pannonia the martyr cult was flourishing: on or at the martyr’s grave – in majority from the time of Diocletian persecution – are being build churches, in which are buried also simple believers, in the sacred proximity of the places where many receive the martyrdom for Christ (*martiribus adscita ctuet*)”. To confirm these historical realities, we also have as argument a very important correspondence of Basile the Great (331-379) regarding the moment on bringing the holy relics of Saint Martyr Sava the Goth from Scythia Minor in Cappadocia. Therefore, it is very important to understand that for the daco-roman Christianity the complete understanding of the term “martyr” is the one of “hostage at the stability of thought”.¹³

The terminological heritage of daco-roman Christianity was supported and developed in the context of ecclesiastical organization. Therefore, from the first Christian centuries we knew some important names of daco-roman bishops with activity in the first dioceses from the north of Danubius, especially in Tomis.¹⁴ Moreover, there is some strong evidence

¹² Dr. NESTOR VORNICESCU, *The Perfection of our National Unity – foundation of the Old Church Unity*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1988, p. 18.

¹³ Moreover, our great historian shows that in the period after the persecutions in the entire Roman Empire “martyrs they were not usually remember under this name, unless we can speak about their quality of confessors of faith – therefore they were adored like *sancti*. In the Latin West the word *martir* even disappeared in favour of *sanctus*, keeping only the term of *martyrium* like a mixt concept, religious and laic, describing the sufferance in a real cause” (VASILE PÂRVAN, *Epigraphic Contributions to the History of Dacian-Roman Christianity*, Bucharest, 1911, p. 135-139).

¹⁴ The historian Vasile Pârvan offers here a complete list of the bishops from Scythia Minor. He remembers that from this period where known only the name on the one form Tomis: “Evangelicus from the time of Diocletian, Philius from the time of Licinius (then empty), further Bretanion on the time of Valens, Gherontius from the Second Ecumenical Council from Constantinople in 381, Theotimul on la 400, Thimoteus participant at the Ecumenical Council in Efes in 431, Ioannes from 448, Alexander participant at the council

about the ascetical and mystical work of the monks from this area. Among them we must especially remember Saints: John Cassian, Dionysus Exiguus and John Maxentius, missionary, apologists and confessors in Constantinople and Rome.¹⁵

Consequently, “Christianity became a conservation element of the Romanian ethos, active in the structure of our culture, in the process of crystallization of literary language, of national conscience and, later, of the national conscience, both in Transylvania and in Muntenia and Moldavia. The end of the premedieval period and the beginning of the Middle Eve represent the ending of the process of Romanian ethnogenesis, the formation of Romanian people with a Latin roots and unique influences of the oriental tradition in the ethnical and linguistical from south-east of Europe, in carpato-danubiano-pontic area”.¹⁶

VI.2. A “Romanian dimension of existence”

Our daco-roman spirituality inspired positively Romanian philosophy, generating many exemplifications and arguments in the support of “*a Romanian dimension of existence*”.¹⁷ Beyond the anachronistic anti-arguments and suppositions in this concern, the Romanian philosophy offers a very interesting overview, underlining some important clarification, more than useful for our research.

The process of particularization of the Christian ethos like a national specific became very present in the dialogue between theology and culture. Therefore, most of the interbelical Romanian thinkers encouraged this

of Constantinople in 449, Theotimus II who was contemporary with the emperor Leon (457-474), Paternus on the time of Iustin, Valentinianus (cca. 500)” (see: VASILE PÂRVAN, *Epigraphic Contributions to the History of Dacian-Roman Christianity*, p. 71-72).

¹⁵ Rev. prof. I.G. COMAN, *Church Scholars of the Acienc Age*, IBMBOR Publishing House, Bucharest, 1979, pp. 59-63.

¹⁶ Dr. NESTOR VORNICESCU, *The Perfection of our National Unity...*, p. 18.

¹⁷ This syntagma is attributed especially to our great philosopher and Christian confessor **Mircea Vulcănescu**. Representative of Romanian intellectuality from the interbelic period, “educated in the school of Dimitrie Gusti and Nae Ionescu”, MV was born at 3 of March 1904 in Bucharest. His parents, Michael and Maria Vulcănescu, both intellectuals, offered him a good education, in the spirit of Christian faith. His predilection for the values of the Romanian people come from a very intense preoccupation for the “metaphysics of religion”. From here, he discovers the principles of “Romanian man” and “Romanian dimension of existence”. In the virtue of this great gift MV holds numerous conferences and write many books and studies specially dedicated to this problematic. Moreover, we can discover the apologetic work and confession of MV. Therefore, he was a martyr of the Romanian nation in the communist jails (MARIAN DIACONU, “Foreword” to MIRCEA VULCĂNESCU, *Logos and Eros*, Paideia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991, p. 5-8).

perspective in the context of the foundation of Romanian state. Starting with Mircea Vulcănescu, the martyr philosopher, we learn about a “Romanian dimension of existence”. Out of this argumentation cannot be neglected the problematic of *daco-roman Christianity*, which is the most important element of specificity of our people and an opening and preamble for the “*Romanian soul*”. “If we try to define the structure of *our national soul*, affirms Mircea Vulcănescu, putting it in a relation with the environment in which was developed our nation, in relation with geographical context from a space infinity curled, like sir Lucian Blaga used to say, with life condition from country, like sir Stahl would say, with special type of life of shepherds and ploughmen, as Densusianu says, with the soul of the mountain man, as Mehedinți and Eminescu think ... and if we will try to put *the name of a daco-roman nation* over all these qualities, we will see that this soul can be characterised through a diversity of qualities, through a series of temptations, through a series of divergent representation about himself, through a series of in actual sentiments which could be united in some personal way of manifestation from the life of another people”.¹⁸

The Romanian theology offers a very large palette of arguments regarding the daco-roman spirituality. We have in this concern two different directions of interpretation, very important for our present research. The first one offers a systematic perspective and therefore an apologetical approach. We name here Nichifor Crainic, father Dumitru Stăniloae and professor Ioan Gh. Savin. The second one gets support in historicocritical method, being developed by our most known petrologists: I.G. Coman, Nestor Vornicescu and Gheorghe Drăgulin.

Nichifor Crainic, the great theologian and Romanian philocalic thinker,¹⁹ brings a very important contribution to the process of definition of

¹⁸ MIRCEA VULCĂNESCU, *Romanian existence dimension*, p. 42.

¹⁹ An important theologian, writher, poet, journalist and Christian philosopher, Nichifor Crainic (n. 22 of December 1882) absolved the Central Seminary (1904-1912) and the Faculty of Theology from Bucharest (1912-1916). He wished to become priest, but the request of consecrations has rejected by the mitropolit Conon Armănescu-Doinici. He fought in the First Mondial War. In 1920, at Lucian Blaga advice, Crainic started the classed of the Faculty of Philosophy from Vienna. Here he receives also the PhD title in Philosophy. After his studies, Crainic becomes firstly a teacher at the Theological Seminary from Bucharest and then teacher at the Faculty of Theology from Chisinau. In 1940 become member of the Romanian Academy, title which will be retired five years later. In 1994 Crainic will be rehabilitated port-mortem in this position. Beyond the critics generated by his political preferences, Nichifor Crainic remains in the memory of our Orthodox Church like a great theologian, being the promoter of the philocaly translations. This great work was completed by his disciple, father Dumitru Stăniloae. Also, father Stăniloae affirms that “Nichifor Crainic was the first Romanian theologian from the

the “*Romanian soul*”. In his conception this syntagma has strong apologetic valences, being used like *argumentum princeps* in the dialogue between theology and culture. In his collection of journalistic texts “Cardinal Points in Chaos”, Crainic takes position against the so-called “intellectualized”, who “opposed to the people and made from the Latin legend the argument of their annexation to the French culture”. Therefore, his perspective in this problematic is, in fact, a statement against the danger of “abdication from autochthonism and Orthodoxy”. For Nichifor Crainic the only solution in the combat with the tendencies of “globalization” was related to the “Romanian soul” in the virtue of daco-roman Christian heritage. “This interior image is based on his real name: the resemblance and icon of God. But how do they reject «divine transcendent», could anybody according to which model can their interior image be made perfect? ... In general, the thirst of knowledge is rather referring to the so-called consuming culture. It is a different attitude from our usual attitude. The traditional wants a creative culture of authentic values, a personal cultural creation. These cannot exclude the cultural consummation, but involve it, giving to himself his subsequent subordination which he possesses. According to the popular expression, the cultural creation is related by the ethos of the people: his from the very his. The mission to create which others cannot create is only in the nature of the people. To know is a way to help the authentic creation. But this creation remains the supreme target!”²⁰

The key-element of these apologies of “Romanian soul” consists in the fact that exists *an existential link between our national identity and faith of the ancestors*. Through this link we can explain and understand the most

modernity who manage to draw the theology from the circle straightened and bypassed of the specialists, presenting it, in an imposing way, to the general attention of the intellectual world ... Nichifor Crainic renewed through the updating of tradition the theology in an orthodox spirit” (Gândirea, an XIX, nr. 4, apr. 1940). In quality of coordinator of the Periodic “Gândirea”, NC “specifies the terms of the cultural, literal and political opposition, characteristically to the *gândirismului* in pragmatic essays, like «The second independence» from 1926, «Between Apollo and Jesus» in 1927 or «The sense of tradition» from 1929. Against the imitation of the occidental culture and of the unconditioned modernism, sustained by Eugen Lovinescu, Crainic pleads for a modern creation inspired by autochthonism and Romanian traditionalism” – see here: ALEXANDRU SANDULESCU, *Going back in time: Romanian Memorialists*, second edition, National Museum of Romanian Literature Publishing Press, Bucharest 2008, pp. 254-267; Deac. IOAN ICA jr, *Nichifor Crainic and the Rediscovery of Mysticism in Orthodoxy in the Mid 20th Century*, introductory study to NICHIFOR CRAINIC, *Mystical Courses. I. Mystical Theology. II. German Mysticism*, Deisis Publishing Press, Sibiu, 2010, pp. 5-115.

²⁰ NICHIFOR CRAINIC, *Guidelines in Chaos*, Timpul Publishing Press, Iasi, 1996, pp. 125-126.

important realisations of the Romanian people. “Was thorough the ethnical character of this people, but was ignored the religious character, says also N. Crainic. If we admit that the religious preoccupation was absent from his soul, then how to explain the old Romanian culture almost entirely religious? How to explain all the architectonic monuments, monastery and Christian churches? How to explain the different warrior coalitions in which Christianity fought against Turkish, meaning against paganism? How to explain the many donations from which hospitals were built, donations originating from the religious feeling? How to explain the many donations and contributions for the monasteries, from the monasteries from Saint Month Athos and from all the Orthodox East? How to explain the material sacrifices of Romanian rulers in the purpose to help the Eastern Patriarchal Sieges which where fallen under the Turkish domination? How to explain the categorical rejection of all catholic and protestant attempt all over the years? How to explain the different theological apologies written by Romanian bishops against Catholicism and Protestantism in the defense of our Orthodox faith? But again, the union with Rome of a part of Transylvanian is a proof of the native Orthodoxy of this people. The Union had made in some dogmatical points which the priests already knew, but the united people remained farther in the seen frames of the traditional Church through the eastern liturgical rite, which is nothing else but a poetical form of the Orthodox dogma. Therefore, through this liturgical tradition includes the fragment of united Transylvanians is integrated in the national unity of the Romanian belief. Without this condition the union with Rome cannot be realized in that context. Through it triumph in a way the popular Orthodoxy of Romanian soul. Therefore, in the Romanian multi-ethnic context from today, the eastern rite of both national churches is the conservatoire formula of the Romanian national block”.²¹

The preoccupations for an authentic spirituality of our people, like extension of daco-roman Christianity, are carried further by father *Dumitru Stăniloae*.²² Disciple of Nichifor Crainic, he is more involved in the

²¹ NICHIFOR CRAINIC, *Guidelines in Chaos*, pp. 132-133.

²² Father **DUMITRU STĂNILOAE** was born at 16 of November 1903 in Vlădeni village, district Brasov. Started his primary classes in Vlădeni, the High School “Andrei Șaguna” from Brasov (1914-1922), the courses of the Faculty of Letter from Bucharest, the Faculty of Theology from Cernăuți (1923-1927), where he received also his PhD degree (1928). With the support of the metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, our great theologian perfected his theological knowledge in Athena (1927-1928), München and Berlin (1928-1929), Paris or Belgrade. As teacher of theology, father Stăniloae started his didactic carrier at the Faculty of Theology from Sibiu (1929-1946). In the period of 1946-1973, he has professor of Dogmatic, Ascetic and Mystique at the Faculty of Theology of Bucharest. Between 1958-1963, father Dumitru Stăniloae has put in jail by the communists, suffering for Christ in

problematic of Romanian Orthodox ethos, justifying his existence and importance through a very complex theological argumentation. In an article, published in '90th in the „Theology and Life/Teologie și viață” Periodic Review,²³ father Dumitru Stăniloae demonstrates the daco-roman spirituality and implicitly our Orthodox faith is an authentic synthesis element between Orient and Occident. “Through Orthodoxy, father Stăniloae notes, we conserved our Christian belief from beginning or (the trough) believe received from early beginnings of our existence like nation, this belief being a very important part of our spirituality”.²⁴

To enforce this theory, father Stăniloae underlines a historical and a biblical interpretation, in the purpose of reevaluation the Christian roots of the Romanian people. He analyses a biblical quotation from *Acts of Apostle (chapter 16, 9-15)*, which speaks about the arrival of Saint Paul, in his second missionary trip, into the parts of Macedonia and Troy. Therefore, father Dumitru Stăniloae thinks that in this missionary trip the Apostle of Gentium brings the Christianity up to our parts, because “these Macedonians where Thracians, named also Betsi”.²⁵ On this logic, the

Aiud and Gherla. His theological work has a great academic and spiritual quality, being considered “one of the most important theologians and thinkers from all over the world”. We remember here some of his most important researches: *Life and Teaching of Saint Gregorios Palamas* (1938); *Jesus Christ or the Restoration of man* (1943); *Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology* for seminaries – in two volumes (1958); *Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology* for faculties / in three volumes (1978); *Moral Orthodox Theology*; *Orthodox Ascetics and Mystical*; *Orthodox Spirituality* (1981); *Spirituality and Communion in the Orthodox Liturgy* (1992); *The Holy Trinity of in the Beginning was the Love* (1993); *Commentary at the Saint John Gospel* (1993); *Jesus Christ the Light of the World* (1993); *The Living of God in Orthodoxy* (1993) etc. He realized also many patristic translations and published hundreds of studies and articles in one of the most important periodic from all over the world. His entire work is partially translated in many international languages. He passed away at 5 of October 1993, being buried in the graveyard of the Monastery Cernica, near to Bucharest (see here: Rev. prof. dr. MIRCEA PACURARIU, *The dictionary of the Romanian Theologians*, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996, p. 418-423).

²³ Rev. prof. DUMITRU STANILOAE, *Why are we Orthodox*, in “Theology and Life”, no. 4-8/1991, pp. 15-27. The text opens the volume *Națiune și creștinism*, work published postum by Elion Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 1-14.

²⁴ Rev. Prof. Dumitru Staniloae, *Nation and Christianity*, pp. 2-3.

²⁵ Besii dwelling till Bosfor, in Bitinia, was being known also with the name of Beti. Troy was one of their cities. Therefore, they were in fact from the roman seed and like prof in this concern was the fact that Eneas, the nephew of Priam, leaving Troy after it was conquered by Thracians, reach Italy, were he founds Rome. But a real prof about the Roman roots of these Thracians and Besi is also the fact that only them are staying here after the retreat of the roman armies from Dacia and then from the south of Danube, being the only speakers of Latin language. On the other hand, we know that in Greece, Egypt,

Romanian theologian enforces his argument about a daco-roman Christianity in an authentic point of view. The Latin language of our ancestors is “distinct from the one which was spread from Rome in all the Occident, being transposed in the fundamental notions of this belief of this population: we say Maker/ Făcător not Crator, Virgin/Fecioară not Virgo, Anasthasis/ Înviere not Resurrection, Father/ Tată not Pater, God/Dumnezeu not Deus. That’s why it is important to say that our people, closely related by the Eastern people, kept the Christian faith as he received it from the beginning, therefore in his original form, specified in the writings of the Eastern Fathers”.²⁶

The argumentation of *the daco-roman heritage* in the theology of father Dumitru Stăniloae is therefore related by *the profound identity of the Romanian people*.²⁷ In his controversy with the great Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga,²⁸ father Stăniloae affirms that the Orthodoxy and the religious

Middle Asia, this language disappeared (Rev. prof. DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, *Nation and Christianity*, p. 3).

²⁶ Rev. prof. DUMITRU STANILLOAE, *Nation and Christianity*, p. 3.

²⁷ The orthodox leaving of the incarnated Through entails an authentic *modus vivendi*, something which define the ethos of the historical entity of a people. After father Dumitru Stăniloae, “in Orthodoxy, Christ give us the His divine power or the very His Divine Life through deification, while He has it through nature ... Only the real presence of the Same Christ in all the believers ... works in each of us by our personal powers. This real presence of Christ goes to the maintaining of the people in the same unity, but in a unity of love, not confusion. This is the point of the Orthodox believe and of the original Christianity kept in it in different forms” (“Why are we Orthodox?”, in vol. *Orthodoxy and nationalism*, Bucharest, 2011, pp. 307-308). Therefore, through this beautiful synthesis of “the specific of the Romanian Orthodox Spirituality, starting from the relationship between Latinity and Orthodoxy”, father Dumitru Stăniloae “offers a specific character in which the Romanian tradition can represent a veritable link between East and West” (see here: *Orthodox Apologetics*, vol. II, *The dialogue with contemporary sciences*, coord. ADRIAN LEMENI, Deac. SORIN MIHALACHE, Rev. RAZVAN IONESCU, Rev. CRISTINEL IOJA, Basilica Publishing Press, 2014, pp. 57-62; see also our work: *Orthodox Apologetics - Confession and Apostolate*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing Press, Craiova, 2017, pp. 333-338).

²⁸ In his book “The Position of Lucian Blaga towards Orthodoxy” (Paidea Publishing Press, Bucharest, 1997, p. 189) father Dumitru Staniloae makes a complex apologetic commentary to the affirmation that the philosopher Lucian Blaga had made in his work “Religion and Spirit”. In this dispute were laid face to face two of the greatest Romanian thinkers: father Dumitru Staniloae – one of the greatest Romanian theologians - and Lucian Blaga – one of the great Romanian philosophers. The way in which they were understood by the contemporary recommends them between the most advised voices in an idea dispute which was more creative than destructive” (Prof. dr. REMUS RUS, “Towards a theology of religions as imagined by Prof. D. Staniloae”, in volume: *Human being and Communion. Occasion to Honor Father Professor Academician Dumitru Staniloae at the age of 90*, Arhiepiscopia Ortodoxa Sibiu Publishing Press, 1993, p. 521; Associate prof.

feeling come from so called “*stylistically matrix*”. Not only is the style basis of religion, but the religious feeling is the most appropriate way of propagation of style and culture. Moreover, father Stăniloae affirms that “the Romanian spirituality cannot be conceived without Orthodoxy, because it cannot be conceived like style which goes idling, but like style essentially applicated to the religious feeling, having as a resort the Orthodoxy ... Therefore, our Orthodoxy isn’t only an arbitrary product of the Romanian style, which can be divided therefore in production, but it is an element deeper than the style and necessary for the existence and functionality of style. The style needs Orthodoxy for his functionality and manifestation; without Orthodoxy the style cannot be functional and knowledgeable and therefore cannot exist a Romanian style. Consequently, the Romanian spirituality is essentially revealed in Orthodoxy”.²⁹

Beside Crainic and Stăniloae, the great professor and apologist *Ioan Gh. Savin*³⁰ speaks about a *national identity like specific of daco-roman symbiosis*. He has on this subject two interesting theories.³¹ In this concern

ADRIAN BOLDIȘOR, *The religious phenomenon between philosophy and theology*, in *Theological Magazine*, no. 95/2013, pp. 86-87).

²⁹ DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, *Lucian Blaga’s view on Christianity and Orthodoxy*, Paideia Publishing Press, Bucharest, 1992, pp. 22-23

³⁰ The teacher **IOAN GH. SAVIN** (1885-1973) is one of the most important personalities from the history of the Romanian Apologetic Theology. He taught this discipline and also classes of Ascetic and Orthodox Mystique at the faculties of theology from Chisnau, Iasi or Bucharest. Starting with the establishment of the communist regime, the personality of our great professor and apologist, as well as the Apologetic discipline, was considered inadequate and incompatible with the “dialectical materialism”. Therefore, starting with 1948, professor Ioan Gh. Savin was forced to retire from the department, being also imprisoned (1950-1956). Therefore, because of his anti-communist position, Savin suffered much injustice from apart of state. Among his most important publications, we remember: “*The Apologetic Course*” in two volumes (1935), with the annexes “*The Nature and Origin of Religion*” (1937), “*God Existence. The Ontological Prove*” (1940) and “*The Cosmologic and Teleological Prove*” (1943) and also many interdisciplinary works, like “*Culture and Religion*” (1927), “*The Science and the Origin of Religion*” (1937), “*Christianity and the Contemporary Understanding*” (1940), “*Theology and History*” (1943), “*Christianity and Romanian Culture*” (1943) etc. Therefore, we can say that by example and Christian confession and also by his great work, Ioan Gh. Savin can be appreciated like “one of the most representative exponents of the Romanian culture and spirituality” (†NICHOLAS, Metropolitan of Banat, “Foreword” to IOAN GH. SAVIN, *Apologetica*, vol. I, edition edited by Radu Diac, Anastasia Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2002, pp. 7-9).

³¹Therefore, we can see that, along the time, existed some interpretation by which *the essence of the Romanian spirit* belonged exclusively to the local side, because of the Dacian heroism from which “we would take the intimate and organic structure of our ethnical nature, like a relationship with the earth and sky, on which the immortal Dacian were very attached”. On the other side, existed also a laic interpretation which opinion was

he sustains that, after the Aurelian retreat from 256, the daco-roman civilization continues to exist, not only because of a well-defined administrative structure, but because of the communion force of the Christian Church, which was founded here through the preach and teaching of Saint Andrew the Apostol. “Under the sign of the Cross and under the communion of the Church, says professor Savin, these two nations of our ancestors here found in a biological and ethnical unity, Romanian unity, which became deeper as long as the Dacian people stayed alone in the front of barbarian invasions, after the Roman retreat over the Danube. The linking element of the people from north of the Danube cannot be the one of their national conscience, still undefined, but the one of religious faith, different from the belief of invaders people. The Christian Church becomes in this way the appropriate institution which defended his new believers from Dacia, and his clerically take the place of the outgoing Roman rulers”.³²

IV.3. The daco-roman Christianity - a patristic perspective

Under the historical-critical aspect, the daco-roman spirituality is compatible with the names of three Romanian theologians, consecrated of a laborious research in the patristic issue from the Romanian space. Father Professor I.G. Coman, Metropolitan Nestor Vornicescu and Father Professor Gheorghe Drăgulin offer a very important perspective over the daco-roman spirituality problematic. With them starts the study of the principal’s bio-bibliographic, historical and contextual coordinates on which he lends the most important part of our research.

The first Romanian theologian who puts the specific of daco-roman Christianity in the classical parameters of the historical-critical research is father professor Ioan G. Coman(1902-1987).³³ His vision about this

that everything that is Romanian come from “*the conquerors romans and from the colonizers, from which we took, with civilization and organization, the language and with it the soul and culture of the Romanian people*” (IOAN Gh. SAVIN, *Christianity and Romanian culture*, Bucharest, 1944, pp. 5-6).

³² IOAN GH. SAVIN, *Creștinismul și cultura română*, p. 5-6.

³³ Theologian and great patristic researcher, father professor **IOAN G. COMAN** was born at 27 of November, in the locality of Dâmbroca, from district Buzău. He passed away at 11 of March 1987, at Bucharest. With a very impressive theological baggage, he has the great merit of being “the founder of the modern Romanian Orthodox Theology”. Was also a prolific writer with an integrative vision, in which he fulfils “an entire life of study and reflection in multiple domain of activity, like: theology, philosophy, history of religion, byzantine culture, classical language, theological history and Romanian spirituality, literature history and Romanian culture”. As a teacher father I.G. Coman was noted at the department of Patristic Theology from the Faculty of Theology from Bucharest, where he served in the period 1944-1970. His *Patristic* in two volumes is still the most normative in

theological theme can be characterized like integrative and synthetic, looking for explanations and answers beyond the usual bio-bibliographical presentations.

Through a very complex research our great professor brings together many archeological materials, literary and historical arguments. His purpose is therefore the underlining of the Christian daco-roman spirituality, of a “great wealth and variety, which had accomplished a very important role in the genesis of the Romanian people in both parts of Danube”. Further on, father professor I.G. Coman remembers the fact that this great heritage of our ancestors wasn’t every time appreciated in his true value. That is why, “we have always the duty to confess the richness and beauty of our country, of the daco-roman people and of the Romanians. We don’t know yet all the beauty and historical values which are hidden yet in the ground of Scythia Minor. This is what we know: inscriptions, archeological sites and especially men who wrote about their beloved country, it’s enough to be aware of the truth which other confess about our country which is the land and the heart of the people from here”.³⁴

The love for the ancestral roots was transformed by father I.G. Coman in a new and unique discipline: “Old Romanian/*Strătomână* Patristic”. Starting with him this academic preoccupation was cultivated with great success by his disciples: the metropolitans Nestor Vornicescu and Nicolae Corneanu, father professor Ștefan Alexe. His research and interpretations revealed many important theological and historical things. Forgotten personalities and literary works received brightness under the pen of our great patristic scholar Ioan Gh. Coman.³⁵ Through these examples he succeeded in defining the Christian argument of our national identity. “From the documents we find out that the Christians of daco-roman origin from Scythia Minor – whatever their name was: Scythe, Goth, Gate or Dacians – belonged in the beginning to the Mother Church from Constantinople and the bishops from Tomis where under the jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchy from the Byzantine capital, being also members in the Holy Council. The rite had from the start an Eastern character, although the

the academical study, from his time till our days. In conclusion, we can say that “father Coman replied to the Orthodox theology his philosophical and literary coefficient and his irenic substance. He restored the academical lecture and also the preach” (Rev. prof. ION BRIA, “A Great Romanian Orthodox Theologian and Scholar: Rev. Prof. Ioan Coman”, introductory study to Rev. prof. dr. IOAN G. COMAN, *About John Chrysostom. Studies*, Basilica Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 9-17).

³⁴ I.G. COMAN, Foreword to la lucrarea *Church Scholars of the Ancient Age*, pp. 5-7.

³⁵ Pr. prof. ION BRIA, *A Great Romanian Orthodox Theologian and Scholar: Rev. Prof. Ioan Coman*, p. 14.

language was Latin or later paleo-Slave which received progressive Romanians elements and, as the language of the people developed, the rite was also growing. In a normal way, the bishops from Scythia Minor and probably from the other parts of roman Dacia know also the Greek language, because they lived in the areas with a strong Greek culture, as it was on the left shore, in permanent contact with Byzantium and with the entire Christian East, as we find out from Saint Basile the Great correspondence (Epistle 155, 164, 165) with Iunius Soranus and with the bishop Bretanion of Tomis ... The Christian inscriptions from Scythia Minor are written also in Latin and in Greek. As the paleo-Slavic language cannot be Slavicized and the Greek language cannot be Hellenized the Romanian Orthodoxy therefore the Latin language cannot Latinize it. The Latin language was for the daco-roman Christians and is for the today Romanian Christians a strong confession of our Latinity and a transmission instrument of the spiritual values, starting with the Orthodox faith. It represents for us the power and glory of Traian's Rome, not of the papal Rome".³⁶

For the importance of our subject we must remember also the metropolitan Nestor Vornicescu.³⁷ He left a great theological heritage, mostly materialized in books, studies and articles. His special contribution comes from the original style, the precision and fidelity of expositive data. Therefore, from the historical and critical perspective of his thinking, we are ensured by the certainty and profound knowledge of the exposed truth. Following his disciple (father professor I.G. Coman), the metropolitan

³⁶ Rev. prof. I.G. COMAN, *Oxford Dictionary of the Orthodox Church. Presentation and critics*, in *Ortodoxia*, no. 3/1978, pp. 562-563.

³⁷ The metropolitan **NESTOR VORNICESCU** come into the world at 1of October 1927 in the village of Lozova-Vorniceni (district of Lăpușna, in Moldavia Republic) and past to heaven in the day of 17 of March 2000, at Craiova. Nestor started his monastic life very earlier, at the Hermitage of "Saint Nechit", near to Neamț, in Moldavia. Later he became a monk in the Monastery of Neamț. His theological education started also at the Monastic Seminary from Neamț (1948-1951). After that, he finished the Orthodox Theological Institute from Bucharest and then the PhD studies at the same academical institution. In 1958 has ordained like priest and in 1962 became the abbe of Monastery "Saint John the New" from Suceava. In 1966 became the abbe of Monastery Neamț. In the same time, he continued his studies in Switzerland. His academical qualities and organization skill recommended him for the stage of bishop. Therefore, he was allected and ordained in 1970 in the siege of vice-bishop of Craiova, by the Holy Council of Romanian Orthodox Church. In 1978 Nestor became the Metropolitan of Oltenia and Archbishop of Craiova. In the field of patristic and ecclesiastical history, he wrote many books, studies and articles (Rev. IONIȚA APOSTOLACHE, *Words of the soul, people and places in the history of the Oltenian Church. Christian testimonies in the pages of Lumina Magazine*, Trinitas Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2017, p. 152-153).

Nestor was always preoccupied by the origin of our people. He had in mind the historic value of personalities and places on which he studied from an original point of view.³⁸ Nestor Vornicescu analyses step by step the history of our nation to underline “the structure and forms of our spirituality, a people characterized by his capacity of sufferance and generosity, with profound aptitudes for human communication and also for the religious tolerance”.³⁹ Through his many patristic research on this issue, as well as the historical evaluation of some events from the life of our people, the Metropolitan scholar shows the way in which the preach of Saint Andrew the Apostle, the Word of our Savior Jesus Christ came in our country. His perspective starts from *the predisposition of the free Dacian people for the belief in Resurrection*, therefore establishing the Christian center of intercultural and inter-religious convergence. On this background of the daco-roman spirituality, it was build an appropriate medium of reception and capitalization of some documents and unique writings from the patristic literature of the first ages.⁴⁰

Last but not least, according to father professor *Gheorghe Drăgulin*, we find also a generous perspective about the daco-roman spirituality, concentrated especially on the personality of Saint Dionysus Exiguus. His academical preoccupation on this subject reveals a great daco-roman saint and his theological heritage, composite by many Christological, canonical and chronological works. We can find a very good presentation about the presence and activity of Exiguus in the Eternal City.⁴¹

³⁸ “Until the 6th century, says IPS Nestor Vornicescu, the Christianity was wide-spread in our parts, being established also the canonical jurisdiction. In the pre-medieval period appears the migrants. The penetration of the Slavs at the beginning of the 7th century, in the north od Danube, influenced the life of the people, but cannot weaken the ethno-cultural unity, being assimilated gradually into the mass of the natives. Having in mind the religious life of our ancestors, A.D. Xenopol observed that until the 9th century the influences of the oriental Christianity were well established that cannot been uprooted by any subsequent influences” (Dr. NESTOR VORNICESCU, *The Perfection of our National Unity – foundation of the Old Church Unity*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing Press, Craiova, 1988, p. 18-19).

³⁹ Dr. NESTOR VORNICESCU, *Historical theology studies. Antology*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1998, p. 8.

⁴⁰ The contribution of our metropolitan father in the recovery of the patristic literature after his spiritual and historical specific was concretized in his monumental research “First Patristic Writings in our Literature. Centuries IV-XVI”, printed by Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1984.

⁴¹ The interest of father professor Gheorghe Dragulin about the work and personality of Saint Dionysus Exiguus is unique in our Romanian patristic theology. His studies on this issue are edifying regarding the historical and doctrinal context in which Saint Dionysus activated in the Eternal City of Rome. Moreover, father Drăgulin offers an original

overview about the relationship between Saint Dionysus Exiguus and Saint Dionysus the Areopagit. Therefore, he tried to demonstrate that they were one and the same person. Most of his academical theories and idea regarding this hypothesis have materialized in books and studies (for instance: *The Ecclesiology of Areopagitical Treaties and their Importance for the Contemporary Ecumenism/Treated Ecceziologia tratatelor areopagitice și importanța ei pentru ecumenismul contemporan* (teză de doctorat), în Revista „Studii Teologice”, nr. 1-4/1979 și în extras la Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1979, 256 p.; *The Identity of Dionysus Pseudo-Areopagite with the Dionysius the Humble (Exiguus)/Identitatea lui Dionisie Pseudo-Areopagitul cu Ieromonahul Dionisie Smeritul (Exiguul)*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1991, 342 p.).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "First Patristic Writings in our Literature. Centuries IV-XVI", printed by Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1984.
2. APOSTOLACHE, Rev. IONIȚA, *Words of the soul, people and places in the history of the Oltenian Church. Christian testimonies in the pages of Lumina Magazine*, Trinitas Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2017.
3. BOLDIȘOR, Associate prof. ADRIAN, *Fenomenul religios între filozofie și teologie (The religious phenomenon between philosophy and theology)*, in: *Revista teologică (Theological Magazine)*, no. 95/2013.
4. BRIA, Rev. prof. ION, "A Great Romanian Orthodox Theologian and Scholar: Rev. Prof. Ioan Coman", introductory study to Rev. prof. dr. Ioan G. Coman, *About John Chrysostom. Studies*, Basilica Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2015.
5. CHRYSOS, EVANGELOR, *Byzantion kai oi Gotoi*, Tessaloniky, 1972.
6. COMAN, Rev. prof. I.G., *Church Scholars of the Acient Age*, IBMBOR Publishing House, Bucharest, 1979.
7. COMAN, Rev. prof. I.G., *Oxford Dictionary of the Orthodox Chuchr. Presentation and critics*, in: *Ortodoxia*, no. 3/1978.
8. CRAINIC, NICHIFOR, *Guidelines in Chaos*, Timpul Publishing Press, Iasi, 1996.
9. DIACONU, MARIAN, "A Spiritual Face of his Time ...", in: Mircea Vulcănescu, *For a New Philosophical Spirituality. The Romanian Dimension of the Existence*, vol. I, forward by Constantin Noica, Eminescu Publishing Press, Bucharest, 1992.
10. DIACONU, MARIAN, "An Ontological Model of Romanian Man", introductory study to the work of Mircea Vulcănescu, *Romanian Dimension of Existence*, Fundația Culturală Română Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991.
11. DIACONU, MARIAN, "Foreword" to Mircea Vulcănescu, *Logos and Eros*, Paideia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991.

12. DRAGULIN, father professor GHEORGHE, *The Ecclesiology of Areopagitical Treaties and their Importance for the Contemporary Ecumenism/Treated Eclezologia tratatelor areopagitice și importanța ei pentru ecumenismul contemporan* (teză de doctorat), in: *Studii Teologice*, nr. 1-4/1979.
13. DRAGULIN, father professor GHEORGHE, *The Identity of Dionysus Pseudo-Areopagite with the Dionysius the Humble (Exiguus)/Identitatea lui Dionisie Pseudo-Areopagitul cu Ieromonahul Dionisie Smeritul (Exiguul)*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1991.
14. ICA, Deac. IOAN, jr, *Nichifor Crainic and the Rediscovery of Mysticism in Orthodoxy in the Mid 20th Century*, introductory study to Nichifor Crainic, *Mystical Courses. I. Mystical Theology. II. German Mysticism*, Deisis Publishing Press, Sibiu, 2010.
15. JIANU, Prof. dr. MAGDA, *About names*, in: *Mitropolia Olteniei*, no. 1-4/2017.
16. LEMENI, Coord. ADRIAN, MIHALACHE, Deac. SORIN, IONESCU, Rev. RAZVAN, IOJA, Rev. CRISTINEL, *Orthodox Apologetics*, vol. II, *The dialogue with contemporary sciences*, Basilica Publishing Press, 2014.
17. NICHOLAS, Metropolitan of Banat, "Foreword" to Ioan Gh. Savin, *Apologetica*, vol. I, edition edited by Radu Diac, Anastasia Publishing Press, Bucharest, 2002.
18. PACURARIU, Rev. prof. dr. MIRCEA, *The dictionary of the Romanian Theologians*, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996.
19. PÂRVAN, VASILE, *Epigraphic Contributions to the History of Dacian- Roman Christianity*, Bucharest, 1911.
20. POPESCU, EMILIAN, *Christianitas Daco- Romana. Florilegium studiorum*, Ed. Academiei Române, București, 1994.
21. POPESCU, EMILIAN, *The Ecclesiastical Organization of Scythia Minor during 4th-6th centuries*, in: *Theological Studies*, nr. 7-10/1980.
22. RUS, Prof. dr. REMUS, "Towards a theology of religions as imagined by Prof. D. Staniloae", in vol.: *Human being and*

- Communion. Occasion to Honor Father Professor Academician Dumitru Staniloae at the age of 90*, Arhiepiscopia Ortodoxa Sibiu Publishing Press, 1993.
23. SANDULESCU, ALEXANDRU, *Going back in time: Romanian Memorialists*, second edition, National Museum of Romanian Literature Publishing Press, Bucharest 2008.
 24. SAVIN, IOAN GH., *Christianity and Romanian culture*, Bucharest, 1944.
 25. STANILOAE, DUMITRU, *Lucian Blaga's view on Christianity and Orthodoxy*, Paideia Publishing Press, Bucharest, 1992.
 26. STANILOAE, Rev. prof. DUMITRU, *Națiune și creștinism*, work published postum by Elion Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004.
 27. STANILOAE, Rev. prof. DUMITRU, *Orthodoxy and Romaniansm*, Basilica Publishing House, Bucharest, 2014.
 28. STANILOAE, Rev. prof. DUMITRU, *Why are we Orthodox*, in *Theology and Life*, no. 4-8/1991.
 29. VORNICESCU, Dr. NESTOR, *Historical theology studies. Antology*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1998.
 30. VORNICESCU, Dr. NESTOR, *The Perfection of our National Unity – foundation of the Old Church Unity*, Mitropolia Olteniei Publishing House, Craiova, 1988.