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HABILITATION THESIS
- ABSTRACT -

*Literature – a point of conjunction between philology and
cultural studies. Interdisciplinary perspective*

Delia-Anamaria RĂCHIȘAN, Assoc. Prof., PhD.
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca
Baia Mare Northern University Center
Faculty of Letters
Department of Philology and Cultural Studies

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ABSTRACT

The habilitation thesis, entitled *Literature – a point of conjunction between philology and cultural studies. Interdisciplinary perspective*, summarizes the academic, scientific, professional achievements from the moment of obtaining the scientific title of Doctor, in the field of Philology (2009), at the University of Bucharest, until now and specifies the landmarks necessary for the evolution and development of each of the five research directions.

The habilitation thesis presents my entire professional, scientific and academic activity, instilled, since the period of studentship (1998-2002, specialization *Romanian language and literature-Ethnology*) and marked, during the doctoral traineeship (2004-2009), by the fascinating universe of cult and folk literature, universe accurately analyzed from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Literature becomes a point of conjunction between philology and cultural studies. Literature designates the field of research, it is like a indispensable crucible both for philology and cultural studies. Cult literature interferes with folk literature, many cult works derive from the folkloric vein of the Romanian nation.

The interdisciplinarity becomes the basis of a quality contemporary education. Applying to interdisciplinarity we cross the boundaries between fields, we appeal to a panoptic view, to creativity, to a flexible, dynamic thinking, we demonstrate the capacity of synthesis. The perspective, being an interdisciplinary one, literature in general (cult/ folk, children's literature, compared/universal) can be approached, using methods and tools of analysis and interpretation with which other disciplines operates, some of them being related, some being outlying disciplines: cultural anthropology, literary criticism, ethnology, philosophy, folklore, history of literature, linguistics, mythology, literary onomastics, pedagogy, psychology, religion, theory of literature, etc. The interdisciplinary perspective is augmented by comparative-analytical analysis, synchronic and diachronic analysis.

Structured, according to the *Guide for the elaboration and writing of the habilitation thesis*, in three distinct chapters, the habilitation thesis emphasizes the scientific, didactic and academic course, the main directions of development, in the global context of significant and topical achievements.

In **the first part** I presented the scientific, professional and academic achievements that are situated at the confluence of five research directions:

1. *Children's literature* emphasizes *infantile folklore*, in particular, children's games - invocations, " tongue twister " [phonetic games], song-games, counters –, approached from an interdisciplinary perspective and correlated with various folkloric categories – ballads, fairy tales, lullabies, riddles, legends, proverbs. The polysemantism of the term "game" was taken into account and the space subject to analysis and interpretation was delimited - the *ethnology of the game*.

2. The osmosis between literary and cultural criticism is enhanced on the one hand by *comparative research*, focused on *literature studies*, on the other hand by *synchronic and diachronic research*, anchored on *cultural studies*.

The *comparative research* focuses on *comparative literature*, approached in an interdisciplinary manner. Due to the common hermeneutic code, the comparative literature uses the analysis and interpretation tools specific to the literature theory. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the national literature, considering certain works – Eminescu's *Cezara* and Macedonski's *Thalassa*, starting from the premise that the latter one can be considered a replica of the former one. At the same time, reference is made to the inclusion of the

aforementioned works in the circuit of universal values, therefore to their interference with foreign works.

The cultural studies, relying on *synchronic and diachronic research*, reveal cultural values, mentalities and symbols inherited, for centuries, from ancestors. Starting from the premise that there is unity in diversity, certain binaries (identity-otherness, particular-general, etc.) are promoted and whenever the case is different correlations-themes, symbols found in other cultural spaces are used. I started from the conviction that when we confront the past with the present we have the moral obligation to promote the cultural heritage, to revitalize the local ethos, to respect the roots of the Romanian people, to recall the Romanian's soul dowry. Recovering the collective memory, the cultural identity, emphasizing the intergenerational transmission, respecting the Romanian cultural values, revitalizing them, propelling them towards the future we have the certainty that they will last from now on.

Both comparative literature studies and cultural studies emphasize the interdisciplinary approach, the comparative-analytical perspective.

3. *The research of the cultured and popular literature* emphasizes the interrelation, underlines themes, motifs analyzed, developed and interpreted in my studies.

4. *The onomastic research* reveals two levels: on the one hand the sliding from the folk literature to the linguistic, relying on the *etymological, sociolinguistic* and *ethnolinguistic* perspective, on the other hand the *literary onomastics* found in the literary works analyzed by me.

5. *The terminology*, referring to the synchronous comparative study of two languages (Romanian-English, respectively Romanian-French), is used in disciplines, such as: folk literature, mythology, ethnology, ethnography.

The directions of research are illustrated through publications, participation in international and national conferences, research projects, to which are added citations and reviews in specialized papers.

The five research directions, outlined in the first part, mark the postdoctoral research activity (after 2009 to the present day).

The interdisciplinary, comparative-analytical, synchronic and diachronic perspective are found in most of my studies, including in the PhD thesis. Through the interdisciplinary perspective, both in my books and in my articles, I strengthen the osmotic relationship between certain disciplines-literature, ethnology, folklore, linguistics, philosophy, pedagogy, psychology, history, mythology, medicine, religion. The interdisciplinarity, relying on the transfer of concepts and methodologies between two or more disciplines, determines dynamism, the interrelation of ideas, allows the contextualization and application of the acquired knowledge. Interdisciplinarity, in terms of the specialist Basarab Nicolescu, aims at "the transfer of methods from one discipline to another". (Nicolescu, 2007:32). Basarab Nicolescu, in the study *Transdisciplinarity. Manifest [Transdisciplinaritatea. Manifest]* (2007), analyzing interdisciplinarity, establishes three fundamental degrees: the degree of generating new disciplines, the epistemological degree, the applicative degree. Taking these concepts, I adapted and applied them in my studies.

The comparative-analytical perspective allows the monitoring of at least two works from the point of view of similarities and differences. The field of comparative studies allows the transition from the theory of literature to cultural studies, from literary criticism to cultural criticism. In my studies, which concern the comparative literature, I have used analysis tools specific to the literature theory. The hermeneutic code, characteristic of the literature theory, can be applied at the level of comparative literature – analysis of the literary text, literary

history, literary criticism, stylistics, the comparative study of national literature in the context of European and universal literature, the study of artistic language in the context of linguistic and semiotic theories, and so on.

The synchronic analysis reveals unity in diversity. The synchronic analysis aims the concomitant research of some works, customs, folklore categories, myths, including the terminology in two languages (Romanian-French, Romanian-English) etc.

The diachronic analysis emphasizes the chronological thread of the events, the evolution in time of the analyzed works and themes.

I have a work experience of over 22 years, and in education of over 18 years. In the 9 years of academic activity, I have published and edited a total of 18 books: the book based on the PhD thesis (1), monographs (4), volume of thematic studies (1), philological volume (1), scientific dictionaries (2), books translated, into English, French, Spanish, after being published in the country in Romanian (3), course support / university textbook (3 – 1 course support is published in collaboration), edited volumes (3 volumes of which 2 volumes as single editor and a volume edited in collaboration). From the 18 books, 16 are published or edited as a single author, and 1 volume is co-edited, and 1 course support is published in collaboration. The 18 books can be structured on three levels – books published as a single author, teaching materials published as a single author or in collaboration, volumes of conferences edited as single author or in collaboration:

A. 12 books as single author – PhD thesis, monographs, volume of thematic studies, philological volume, scientific dictionaries, books translated, after being published in the country, to publishers from abroad:

- *Single author's book, based on the PhD thesis: 1;*
- *Single author of a monograph published in English at a publishing house from abroad: 1;*
- *Monographs published in Romanian, single author: 3;*
- *Volume of thematic studies, single author: 1;*
- *Philological volume, single author: 1;*
- *Scientific dictionaries (Romanian-English, Romanian-French), single author: 2;*
- *Books translated, in English, Spanish, French, after being published in the country, to publishers abroad: 3.*

B. 3 teaching materials as single author:

- *Course support / University handbook with ISBN, single author: 2.*
- *Course support with ISBN, published in collaboration: 1.*

C. 3 volumes of (inter) national conferences edited/coordinated:

- *International conferences volumes with a single editor/coordinator: 2;*
- *National conference volumes with two coordinators: 1.*

I have published 56 articles (of which 50 articles are published as a single author and 6 articles in collaboration). The articles are published in Romanian, English, Italian. I have attended 30 conferences (25 international conferences and 5 national conferences). In total I have 20 reviews (of which 6 reviews are realized by the author, and 14 by other authors). The favorable citations and reviews (*Nord Literar, Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Philologica, Memoria Ethnologica, Cercetări filosofico-psiologice* etc.), published in scientific journals, some indexed Ebsco, others Ceool, reveal my professional activity and the impact of the research results in the Romanian and international academic environment. The books and translations, published abroad, the Google Scholar platform, the international databases highlight the involvement in the academic life, the visibility at national and international level and constitute a criterion for evaluating the scientific and academic activity. At the same time, I have carried out research activity in the projects in which I have been involved (2 research

projects, as a member and a scholarship member). Over the time, I have also been active in other projects (6 cultural projects, as organizer/manager, 6 other cultural/educational projects, as coordinator or in the team of organizers or trainers). Also, I have achieved institutional partnerships, I have been involved in promotion activities in the exogenous environment (I have taught 2 free courses, for a certain period of time, attended by pensioners, teachers from pre-university education, students, pupils). I'm in charge of the magazine "Nord Cultural" since 2011, as editor-in-chief, magazine which, at the present moment, has reached number 18. The magazine is addressed to students, master, doctoral students. At the same time, I coordinated the Ethnology Circle attended by students and master students, from various specializations, who value the ancestral cultural values, I made 18 ethnological/ethnographic documentaries subtitled in English.

I participated in training courses, I got involved in training activities for students and master students, paying special attention to the training of professional and transversal - assertiveness competences, confidence, critical spirit, teamwork etc.

The second part focuses on the continuation and deepening of the five research directions: 1. Literature for children: *Children's Games and Literature*; 2. Comparative and universal literature: *The damned of the comparative and universal literature - the genius, the titan, the demon*; 3. *Cult literature. Folk Literature - The myth of the Flyer in cult and folk literature; The universals of the cult and folk fairy tale [Mitul Zburătorului în literatura cultă și populară; Universaliiile basmului cult și popular]*; 4. Literary onomastics - *Eminescu's simbonimes [Simbonime eminesciene]*; 5. Terminology: *The scientific and popular terminology of medicinal herbs. Interdisciplinary perspective [Terminologia științifică și populară a ierburilor de leac. Perspectivă interdisciplinară]*.

On a professional level, I will develop, with the same accuracy and perseverance, courses and teaching materials to support students and master students.

On an academical level, I will organize conferences, I will edit volumes, I will coordinate projects. I will involve the students, the master students, the PhD students, as I did until now, in international scientific events that will harness their qualitative performance and will ensure a motivated and rigorous training in the field. The courses, teaching materials, international conferences, in which they will attend, will contribute to the professional training of the young researchers.

The third part of the paper presents the main bibliographic sources that have been used to highlight my scientific, professional and academic career.