

ABSTRACT OF THE HABILITATION THESIS ON THE THEME
THE SPACE AS CHARACTER AND THE CHARACTER AS SPACE.
APPROACHES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE THEORY OF IMAGINARY

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The present habilitation thesis represents a synthesis of our scientific and professional evolution related to the Theory of imaginary, a research direction we continued to be interested in after we obtained the title of PhD in Philology (2005).

The theory of imaginary is a research direction in literature appeared at the end of the last century. It is a technique on a special support, approaching what is already valorised. The value is given by intuition, practice and the experience of the artistic phenomenon. Thus, the critical act is, in turn, an act of creation, a new creation of a universe. The imaginary appears in all the domains: scientific, political and, especially, cultural. It is solicited by many disciplines, as: the history of religions, the history of art and literature, the history of sciences, the history of ideologies, the history of mentalities and the historic anthropology. The theory of imaginary is an interdisciplinary theory, with a starting point in the comparative literature and elements taken from Jung's parentage (the collective unconscious and the archetypes), the theory of the myths, the sociology of art, the theory of mentalities, psychology (the formation and the structure of image), hermeneutics (the problematization and the vision on the research), phenomenology, semiotics (the sign and the image), etc. The theory of imaginary took all elements from all this domains and gave as result a multidisciplinary theory.

The first part of our thesis is a succinct passage from the research directions and methods from the 20th century: the Russian formalism, the phenomenology, the structuralism, the post-structuralism, the deconstructionism, the psychology of literature, the psychoanalysis of literature, hermeneutics, the sociology of literature and the theory of imaginary. We presented relevant studies related to the field of imaginary and to our theme.

The publishing in 2007 of our PhD thesis *Pavel Dan și globul de cristal al creatorului. Abordări pe suportul teoriei imaginarului* was not our final exegetic point for Pavel Dan's works. We continued the hermeneutic and comparative exegesis of the works belonging to the Transylvanian writer. Our studies were presented at national and international conferences and partially published in the volumes: *Obiectiv/ Subiectiv. Încercări de stabilizare a fluidului* (Editura Tipomoldova, 2013) and *Studii literare. Abordări pe suportul științei imaginarului*, (Editura Academiei Române, 2016).

As executive manager of the Centre for the Research of the Imaginary "Speculum", we organised almost annual the scientific sessions of the Centre, dedicated to important themes from the theory of imaginary. We published a series of studies related to spatiality and other major categories of the text in the yearly volume of the Centre, *Incursiuni în imaginar*.

Also in the Centre "Speculum", together with students of our Faculty, we initiated a series of meetings with contemporary authors on the theme "Between the intention of the author and interpretation" ("Între intenția autorului și interpretare"). All the discussions related to the process of creation were published in 2008 in a homonymous volume *Între intenția autorului și interpretare* (Editura Imago, Sibiu).

The last part of our thesis presents our projects in the field of the imaginary. A first project is strictly linked to the theme of the present thesis, *The Space as Character and the Character as Space*, aiming to develop studies that will be later included in a volume. Related

to this research direction, a first point of interest is the connection between the space of the text and the characters. This correspondence was called in different ways in time: “the topology of the character”, “micro-space of interpersonal connections”, “the study of the frontiers”, “social space as bio-communication and, recently, “proxemics”. It defines the connection of the space with the character, another major category of the text.

Proxemics, as E.T. Hall calls it, is a term from sociology. It investigates the way an individual structure unconsciously the space, establishes the interpersonal distances in the daily transactions, organizes the space in houses and buildings and, last but not least, configures cities. Inside the text, the characters construct themselves depending on their space as play. The space presents symbolic characteristics, the symbolism being a matter of perception of each character.

We met the idea applied in literature at the French researchers Abraham Moles and Élisabeth A. Rohmer, in their study *Psychologie de l'espace* (1972), where the characters in the private space of the main characters are called “local accidents”. The world structures around the Self depending on the manner the character sees the world and acts inside it. The situation of the Self in the centre of the world is a condition for the existence of that world. The world centred on any Self is populated by beings and events depending on the perception of the individual. For the one contemplating the world from outside, the people populating it are seen as “local accidents”, “points” to be observed if the viewer wants to observe them.

We intend to propose the space and the character, two major categories of the literary text, rarely researched in our country, as theme for the conference of the Centre Speculum in. the conference from 2017 is organised in co-operation with the University of Navarra, on the theme of *Imaginary, identity and alterity in literature (Imaginar, identitate și alteritate în literatură)*. We expect numerous participants, as it happened to all the editions of the conference, including PhD candidates from our University and other Romanian universities.