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Annexe no. 6

SUMMARY OF THE HABILITATION THESIS*

**TITLE: INTERTEXT AND CONTEXT IN THE WORK OF CAMIL
PETRESCU. GENETIC CRITICISM, IDEOLOGY, CENSORSHIP**

Field of specialisation: PHILOLOGY

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The thesis starts from a question that is essential to any critic concerned with the genesis of the literary work: how can genetic criticism clarify the relationship between authorial intention and the ideological pressures that shape a text prior to its publication? In Camil Petrescu's case, this question acquires particular acuity, since his postwar works, *Bălcescu* and *Un om între oameni* [A man among people], were created, drafted, and printed during a time dominated by censorship, ideological control, and the programmatic rewriting of the past. Our study demonstrates that, in such complex contexts, the manuscript becomes not only a space of creation, but also one of negotiation: between the writer's freedom and the constraints of the period, between the aesthetic work and political imperatives, between document and fiction. This perspective aligns itself with a hermeneutics of the "process" rather than of the "product", according to Louis Hay and John Bryant.

The first part of the thesis offers a remarkable synthesis of the theoretical debates concerning the notion of "text". Starting from Paul Ricoeur's functional definition, "*any discourse fixed by writing*", and ending with G. Thomas Tanselle's radical belief that "*there are no texts, only interpretations*", we have argued that the text is simultaneously material and immaterial, stable and fluid, fixed and in the process of becoming. By analysing concepts such as *avant-texte* (Pierre-Marc de Biasi), *textual fluidity* (John Bryant), *the text in statu nascendi* (Louis Hay), *the materiality of the medium* (Hans Walter Gabler), and *the impact of Digital Humanities* on the ontology of the text, we have argued that genetic criticism is not a philological appendix, but an autonomous discipline, capable of revealing the internal dynamics of literary creation.

We also attempted to place Camil Petrescu's intellectual biography between literary vocation and political conjuncture. By reconstructing the context of 1944-1957, using archived documents, press materials, memoirs, and Secret Police [Securitate] files, we have offered a nuanced image, far removed from customary simplifications. Camil Petrescu was not a "collaborationist", but neither was he an overt opponent. He participated in ARLUS meetings and left-wing groupings, while also being monitored by the Securitate. He was perceived as a proud intellectual, difficult to fit into the patterns of socialist realism. He accepted to write *Bălcescu* in 1948, not as a commission, but as an intellectual challenge. The writer found himself at a crossroads between the desire to remain faithful to historical truth and the pressure to conform to the new ideology. This tension becomes visible in the manuscripts, in successive textual versions, in hesitations, rewritings, additions, and omissions.

When analysing *Bălcescu* (1949) by Camil Petrescu, we have found that the dramatic play represents the first stage of a broader literary project. The manuscripts show that the novel *Un om între oameni* [A man among people] grew organically out of *Bălcescu*. The writer's working notebooks (M.N.L.R. 17211/V, VI, VII, XXIII) contain chronological sketches, reading notes, excerpts, and summaries from works by N. Bălcescu, I. Ghica, I. Heliade-Rădulescu, D. Papazoglu, P.P. Panaitescu, Ioan C. Filitti, C. Gane, N. Popescu-Doreanu, Gh. Georgescu-Buzău. The writer worked with massive documentation, exceeding 5,000 pages of works read. A revealing example is the way in which Camil Petrescu appropriated the description of the Romanian village from *Însemnare a călătoriei mele...*[Notes from my travels] by Dinicu Golescu (1825). In the play, the quote is modernized; in the novel, it is restored to its archaic form. This double transcription shows how the writer oscillated between documentary fidelity and adaptation to the aesthetic and ideological norms of the moment.

The central part of the thesis focuses on the novel *Un om între oameni* [A man among people] (vols. I–III, 1953, 1955, 1957). Here, genetic criticism demonstrates its full ideological relevance, as we argue that the novel is not merely the result of a political commission, but also the natural outcome of the author's personal need to expand the play. The massive amount of research he had done led the writer to push the boundaries of a play toward a novel. The ideological constraints of the time influenced not only reception, but the act of creation itself. The analysis of the different versions of the chapter "O întâlnire hotărâtoare" [A decisive meeting] (*Un om între oameni* [A man among people], vol. I, Book One) is exemplary. The manuscripts reveal that historical characters (Mitiță Filipescu, Eftimie Murgu, D. Macedonschi, etc.) are constructed through the overlapping of sources, successive rewritings, and adjustments dictated by context. We worked with an impressive number of manuscripts and, by ordering, comparing, and interpreting them, we were able to reconstruct some of the drafts, their order, renumbering, overwriting, interpolations, erasures, marginal annotations, and bibliographical references. In addition, we introduced the operational concepts of "narrow grid" (i.e., eliminations suggested by censorship) and "extended grid" (i. e., ideological additions by the author). Using manuscript evidence, we demonstrated how the ideology of the Romanian Workers' Party, under Soviet influence, shaped not only the final (printed) form, but also the creative process itself. At the same time, we highlighted the intertextual relationship between memoir writing, historiography, literature, and ideology, recovering part of works that inspired Camil Petrescu in his writing.

Intertext, as used here, designates the network of texts, sources, documents, and discourses that Camil Petrescu integrates, rewrites, or transforms in the process of drafting the novel *Un om între oameni* [*A man among people*].

In order to recover as much as possible from the historical context, we conducted an in-depth examination of the press after 23 August 1944, when Romania left the military alliance with Nazi Germany, showing how official critical discourse attempted to “recover” Camil Petrescu’s work by placing it within a Marxist-Leninist framework. Vera Călin’s review is emblematic. She criticises the author for the “fracture in perspective” produced by directly quoting Dinicu Golescu, an observation that betrays the political anxiety of the period. This section shows how genetic criticism can reveal not only how a text is created, but also how its reception is designed. We also analysed the screenplay *Bălcescu*. Among other aspects, we discussed the screenplay and the manner in which posthumous editors “completed” the novel *Un om între oameni* with fragments from the reprinted play, in its modified 1952 form, whose ending suppresses part of the writer’s power to imprint his vision upon the character. This is a philologically debatable gesture, yet it is revealing for the central idea of genetic criticism: the text is always open, always revisable.

The conclusion of the thesis is clear: *Bălcescu* and *Un om între oameni* [*A man among people*] cannot be reduced to conjunctural literary products, yet neither can they be extracted from their ideological context. They are works of *negotiation*, of *tension*, of *lucid compromise*, of a creative will that seeks to remain faithful to inner truth in an age of imposed truths. We have tried to offer a nuanced perspective on intellectual compromise and the mechanisms of artistic survival. To the extent that our approach allows for the formulation of some perspectives related to the original contributions made by the candidate, we can say that we have striven to acclimatize genetic criticism to the characteristics of Romanian post-war literature from the Stalinist decade. The working hypotheses, however, remain open to further verification and completion. Starting from the distinction between the narrow grid and the obtuse grid of censorship, we have built a methodological framework through which the genesis of the text can be understood in relation to the mechanisms of ideological control. This approach, based on the analysis of the stages of writing and the theoretical conceptualizations of Paul Ricoeur, G. Thomas Tanselle, Hans Walter Gabler and Louis Hay, would represent a useful tool in Romanian literary research, as it suggests that political pressure intervenes not only on reception, but also on the creative process. The analysis of the manuscripts, workbooks and typescripts indicates that Bălcescu and A Man Among Men

form a continuous literary project, in the sense of the theory of the “fluid text” formulated by John Bryant. This argument, supported by philological criteria, seems to open an unexplored window on Camil Petrescu's late work, suggesting that the novel flows organically from the play, not only thematically, but also genetically. By examining the variants, overwritings, interpolated texts, chapter renumbering and the internal logic of the manuscripts, I have reconstructed, within the limits of the available documents, a possible chronology of Camil Petrescu's project. This reconstruction, carried out in the spirit of Pierre-Marc de Biasi's definition of avant-text, could become a methodological model applicable to other Romanian literary works.

The candidate's specialization will continue, within the Romanian Academy and the doctoral school within this forum of research, development and innovation, towards the production of printed philological editions and critical digital ones. This second coordinate involves the application of skills specific to the respective sector of activity. One of the goals is to provide tools for the in-depth analysis of the creative laboratory left by a writer. However, this can only be possible after the natural operations of interpreting the text written on paper have been carried out. Therefore, the editor studies the birth of the text, doing genetic criticism. Starting from the model of the French school of studying fiction, we will focus on two writings belonging to Camil Petrescu: the drama *Bălcescu* (Editura de Stat, 1949), respectively the novel *Un om între oameni* [A man among people] (Editura Tineretului, I – 1953; II – 1955; III –, posthumously 1957). The objective is to reconstruct the work done by the author, to recover the chronology of the various stages of work and to identify the creative and drafting process, starting from drafts, notes, notes, references, summaries made by Camil Petrescu from books on history, politics and literary criticism, chronologies, drafts, blotters, etc. This research work involves investigating the 36 A5 manuscript notebooks from the archive of the National Museum of Romanian Literature and the typescripts of the novel trilogy from the "Camil Petrescu" Archive at the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. The most thorough study of the holographic and typewritten documents, accompanied by amendments such as cuts, additions and insertions, is in full agreement with the knowledge-based society of our times.

By outlining as meticulously as possible the path from idea to textual version, following the various modifications made by Camil Petrescu himself before sending the final proof to print, looking for changes from one edition to another of the prose *A Man Among Men* (such as in the one edited by Al. Rosetti and Liviu Călin, 5 volumes, Editura pentru Literatura, 1962; or in the one

compiled by Liviu Călin, 3 volumes, Editura Minerva, 1982–1983–1984), we will have a database that we will have to model, share and display in an interface that is as efficient as possible both for the transmission of intellectual content and for the user. From here, the candidate's specialization in the field of Digital Humanities begins. The humanities researcher in the era of digitalization must cover a complex sphere of learning, deepening and applying textual data organization languages such as JSON, XML, TEI, AntConc, Voyant Tools, Python, etc. The use of computers in humanities research already has a long tradition, and various digitized corpora have been established in the Romanian space. The notion of “text” has changed upon contact with digital civilization, breaking away from the etymology of a fabric of signs. Therefore, it is no longer a sequence of some extent, a convention built on the basis of an alphabet, endowed by the author(s) with a series of intentionalities and invested by the reader with meanings.

The text becomes a programming language, a sequence of characters, an algorithm, a chain of images, a mediated interaction, a concatenation of visualizations obtained through a click (from the mouse/keyboard), a list of possible digital graphic representations. The digital text edition (digital text edition) is not the simple transition of a text prepared in an editor such as Adobe InDesign, but a network of images, in which the text chosen by the research team constitutes, of course, a fundamental part, but does not cover the way in which the literary historian understands to explain the emergence of the most coherent and rigorous version from a linguistic point of view. However, in order for all these elements to be harmonized, a very good preparation in the humanities disciplines that make it possible to compile an edition and a good mastery of how to build an online platform of this kind is needed. Perhaps the most interesting aspect towards which such a research school that we propose to consolidate within the Romanian Academy is oriented is the philological editing, by electronic means, of the most extensive corpora from all humanities fields. We are talking, of course, about interdisciplinarity, but, in particular, about collaboration, customization and integration of results in an online platform, which, having the features of an electronic template (*digital framework*), will host a database of the canon of linguistic, literary, theological, historical, philosophical, psychological, sociological, legal culture, etc.

Within the digital paradigm, the philological editor/literary text researcher does not write (type) the text he/she is caring for. The researcher proposes the most systematized, informed, and attractive ways of presenting the elements that make up an edition. Rather, the text of a critical digital edition is gradually developed from the following dimensions: archival material documents

(manuscripts, typescripts, letters, lab notebooks, etc.); from drawings; from clippings made from newspapers, magazines, and books used in the genesis of the work; from corrections made by the author on pre-print versions and/or on proof copies of a book; from any marginal corrections by an editor at the publishing house. All these elements become public, are uploaded, and visualized through transcription and by applying knowledge of philology, stylistics, history, and literary criticism. In the digital edition, the layers of the genesis of the text (from a laboratory with notes to a possible printed volume with all kinds of corrections) are in sight of any user. One of the effects of this change in methodology would be that the text edited in a book is relativized, and the multiple text is easily accessible. In the context of research, development and innovation, such projects involve the training and specialization of philological IT-scientists, following cooperation between institutions with a humanistic profile and those focused on studying programming languages. It is a natural, inevitable and indispensable step in the information society based on knowledge.