

## HABILITATION PAPER

### EDIFICATION AND DECONSTRUCTION IN CONTEMPORARY ART

#### Abstract

Codrina Laura Ioniță, Associate Professor, PhD

In a world more and more tormented by a relativism taken to extremes, searching for a meaning and claiming that there is a spiritual essence in art can seem an almost anachronic endeavour. Despite all these, during my entire didactic activity and academic research, finding and understanding the deep meaning of the artistic phenomenon have become my "leading ideas". The intuition of the existence of a spiritual basis in art has been a conviction which has become clearer and clearer, during the years of research. But, the contemporary space of art offers enough examples which contradict the idea stated above, imposing different interpretations. The title of the habilitation paper tries to underline this contradictory aspect in particular, towards which I have lately directed all my studies.

From this perspective, the habilitation paper is intended to be a presentation of my accomplishments and didactic preoccupations and an introduction in the main research topics seen as a core of my scientific preoccupations from the moment of defending my PhD (2006) up to the present. Structured in two main parts, the first one presenting didactic, scientific and artistic accomplishments, while the second one - the projects proposed for continuing my academic career, the paper is preceded by an abstract and it ends with a list of bibliographical references.

Didactic achievements have been mostly directed towards offering and transmitting knowledge from the world of history of arts to students, as updated and systematized as possible, presented in an interactive form, of permanent communication and discussions. In this respect, I edited my courses on DVD, in order to have the possibility to exemplify my statements using as many images of art works as possible. Among the courses that I have held over the years (*Tendencies in Contemporary Art*, *Styles in Art*, *The History of Contemporary Art*, *Interactive Arts* and others), we mention the course available on DVD called *Visible and Invisible in Artistic Movements*, which is a systematization of the trends in the history of arts according to the dualistic principle of Tudor Vianu: "art renders the visible world or its transcendent ideal". The course *Expresionist and Abstract Movements in Contemporary Art* is an enquiry of these tendencies both from the perspective of their avangardist origins and from the point of view of postmodern recommencements and reinterpretations. Another element of novelty in the field of academic courses is the one taught at the Interdisciplinary Master, *The Invisible in Abstract Art*, which is an incursion in abstract movements from the perspective of "the non-world", of "the yonside" that it represents. Moreover, the course *Art and Ideology in the Modern and*

*Contemporary Period* proposes an original approach of the topic, being an incursion in the causes of ideologizing art and in the way in which art was used and continues to be used as a means of propaganda. In parallel, my objective for this course is also to identify ways of resisting to ideologizing through art. Alongside the courses, my involvement in the didactic and academic process has also been materialized in activities such as the collaboration to the writing up of the *Monography of the University*, the collaboration to the organization of student events such as the Symposia of doctorate candidates or Colloquies of students, the coordination of some student exhibitions made in partnership with highschools from Iași, my activation in contest juries and others. In this respect, we also mention activities which complement the ones mentioned above and have a connection with the didactic process, such as the organization of international symposia, the participation at the management of the university as a member of the Senate, the participation at institutional evaluations as an ARACIS member.

Regarding my accomplishments in the field of scientific research, my quests have been especially directed towards the history of contemporary art. Born first of all from a deep wonderment concerning the major discrepancy between the arts of past centuries and a part of the arts specific to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, my questions have tried to find an answer by primarily identifying a common basis between the past and some contemporary manifestations. The research started with doctoral studies, in which a phenomenological grate applied to the abstract art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has allowed the revealing of its spiritual foundation, has constantly continued during the following years, being materialized in books, studies and articles published at important publishing houses, such as IGI Global, USA, Éditions Universitaires de Lyon III, Éditions du Centre Gaston Bachelard, Dijon, or in presentations at conferences and scientific events. Together with the mentioned instructive dimension, in the contemporary artistic space, we can notice a powerful opposing tendency, of deconstruction and despiritualization whose causes I have tried to decipher in my recent studies and research. Another element of novelty is the study of some Romanian artistic tendencies from the art of the last communist decades, tendencies that have been insufficiently studied or not even studied so far from a scientific perspective, I have approached them from the point of view of the hermeneutics of the symbol and the rapport with spirituality and the sacred. What is relevant is not the political resistance of art, but a break up regarding levels, an ontological difference in which artists place themselves in order to escape from the constraints of dialectic materialism and socialist realism. In close connection with spirituality, there are also the interpretations that contemporary artists bring to the motifs and topics taken from the past, especially from the medieval period. The recapitalization in postmodernity of the elements recovered from the past and reinterpreted in the works of contemporary artists, both in universal and Romanian art, has been the topic of several research papers that I have published or presented in public.

As a fulfilment of the fascination for the way in which the beauty of medieval art can be discovered and presented in contemporaneity, inside the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design, I have set the basis of the Centre of Research of Medieval Art "Vasile Drăguț", having Tereza Sinigalia, Professor, PhD as its manager. Starting from 2014, as part of the centre's activity, I

have edited, as the main editor, the magazine *Anastasis, Research in Medieval Culture and Art*, indexed in important international data bases (ERIH PLUS, EBSCO, DOAJ, CEEOL and others). Alongside the editing of *Anastasis* magazine, "Vasile Drăguț" Centre has organized national and international Symposia and Colloquies, conferences and lectures with invited professors from the country and from abroad. Other activities have had as objective the involvement in educational research projects or collaborations with universities from abroad.

The last part of my thesis contains my plans of development and evolution of my didactic career, of the activities in the academic community and of the directions of scientific research.