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Visual experiences in the Postmodern Era.

Meaningful Visual practices

Habilitation Thesis

Summary

The depiction of the professional activity of a professor should include the training steps of the candidate's personality and the evolutionary stages in his career. Therefore, my presentation will also include references to information that is contained in the curriculum vitae and in the list of published works. However, the focus of my thesis will shift to how I managed to integrate knowledge and practice in different research and development activities, highlighting the need to address research projects in an interdisciplinary way and to build education programs at both Bachelor's and Master's levels. Information on academic management will complete the picture of the work that helped both the development of the Department of Journalism and my academic career. All this will set the natural outlines of my professional work and the directions for future academic career development.

My education is that of a BA in Philology. The first stage in my career is the time spent at the Faculty of Letters of "Babeş-Bolyai" University. My main activities and responsibilities were coordinating seminars and courses, participating in national and international conferences, coordinating bachelor theses and dissertation papers. During this time, I developed and published several papers and worksheets to support teaching. My research focused on comparative literature, mythology, anthropology and was brought to fruition with the Ph.D. thesis *Mythic Structures in Contemporary Prose*, which was published by *Casa cărții de știință* Publishing in 2003. This paper presents the contemporary fiction picture viewed from a certain perspective, that of the discovery of common structures, possible parallels, analogies, similarities expressed by the existence of an archetypal,

mythological layer of literature, reactivated after a long period of occultation of the mythical-symbolic imaginary. Also, I published papers referring to the same topic in different scientific journals and conference proceedings.

The second stage of my career is working in the Journalism Department, where I teach the following Bachelor's level courses: Visual Communication, Cultural Journalism, Opinion Writing, and the Master courses Visual Culture, Symbolic Communication and Media Culture.

My work in a new area, that of communication sciences, involved intense preparation for accessing the domain, preparing worksheets and research projects by developing single author books, studies and articles published in scientific journals or in the cultural press, given the specificity of the courses taught by me (cultural journalism, media culture). Also I started to research visual communication, publishing studies and the first volume on *Visual Communication* (2008). The book aims to open the field of research from various perspectives, in order to demonstrate the complexity of the phenomenon from the perspective of producing images and other visual artifacts, and in terms of their reception, and thus the effects that the affluence of images has on human life. Then I published a collection of theoretical and critical essays that approach visual as a cultural and social process. The book *Visual culture* (2012) describes the history and conventions of visual perception, the role of visual description, production practices and visual reproduction in the contemporary cultural context. Perspectives range from rhetoric to semiotics, from cultural studies to critical theory, emphasizing the social relationship between visual and truth, and new research on the visual being of the contemporary culture.

It is equally important to mention the design and editing of books aimed at developing the teaching and research interests of the department's professors on specialized topics that will support the development directions of scientific research, new master degree programs *Media Production, Media Management, Media Communication* which I am coordinating and which bring a new dimension to the professional development of students enrolled in these programs. Also, I am editing the journal *Studia UBB Ephemerides* and I am co-editing the *Journal of Media Research*, both indexed in international databases. Additionally, I have carried out activities of academic and cultural counseling, promoting cultural projects and media production projects convergent with the orientation of the educational program in the field of journalism towards online communication studies, and in conjunction with the evolution of communication and contemporary media production.

I will mention some of the research topics that I have approached:

- The question of symbolical communication with the purpose of interpreting symbolic meaning of contemporary media products.
- The question of media production as a model of students' specialization.
- The question of media literacy as a means of developing critical and production abilities and also as a means of protecting us from possible forms of media manipulation.
- The question of media diversity as representation of people in intercultural communication and the role of the media in this process.
- The question of visual communication/visual culture as methods of visual artifacts' analysis in order to understand the role of the visual message in contemporary society.

Starting from such a portfolio, my intentions for future professional development in the immediate period of time refers to the refinement of the talent and ingenuity of individuals, taking into account the opportunity offered in recent years by new technologies, to be creative, original and efficient, which is a necessary step in order to obtain my habilitation certificate and help further develop research on the topics above by working with doctoral students.