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On Death in Literary Studies

Abstract: One of the most controversial and hotly debated concepts in contemporary literary theory is that of “crisis”. Philosophers and theorists speak about the “death of the author”, the “death of literature”, post – humanism and trans – humanism (which is also a kind of “death of man”), and so on. However, these “alarmist” claims seem to point rather to internal changes and evolutions of paradigms and models than to the actual ends of domains and concepts. Moreover, they are also successful devices for drawing public attention and critical acclaim, for conferring prestige to their conveyors. My point is, evoking Theodor Adorno’s “To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric”, that the latest global calamities of the pandemic and of the war in Ukraine demand a more moral use of the term „death”. The metaphorical and abstract grand – narrative of the “end of man” fades away when we are confronted with the tragic and concrete realities of people suffering and dying in horrible conditions. Without ignoring the failures of anthropocentrism and the valid criticisms concerning the attitude and position of the human species within the planetary ecosystem, this paper engages with the possibility of ideologically – driven ethics giving way to a “humanism” *tout court* (not new – , not after – , not non – humanism), predicated on the imperative of caring about actual individuals in pain.

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He has published volumes of literary studies and prose narrative:

In France: *Le Paradis interdit au Moyen Âge. 1. La quête manquée de l’Eden oriental*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2004; *La quête manquée de l’Avalon occidentale. Le Paradis interdit au Moyen Age – 2*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2006; *Du paradis perdu à l’antiutopie aux XVI^e – XVIII^e siècles*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2010; *Les antiutopies classiques*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2012; *Pour une morphologie du genre utopique*, Classiques Garnier, 2018; *Archétypologie postmoderne*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2019.

In Romania: *Nichita Stănescu – Orizontul imaginar [The Imaginary Horizon of Nichita Stănescu]*, Imago, 1993, 2002; 2013; *Lucian Blaga – Geneza lumilor imaginare [The Genesis of the Imaginary World of Lucian Blaga]*, Institutul European, 1998, 2013; *10 studii de arhetipologie [10 Studies in Archetypology]*, Dacia, 1999, 2007; *De la arhetip la anarhetip [From Archetype to Anarchetype]*, Polirom, 2006; *Concepte și metode în cercetarea imaginărilor* (ed.) [*Concepts and Methods in the Study of the Imagination. The Phantasma Debates*], Polirom, Iași, 2007; *Psihobiografii [Psycho – biographies]*, Polirom, Iași, 2011; *Morfologia lumilor posibile. Utopie*,

antiutopie, Science – Fiction, Fantasy (ed.) [*A Morphology of Possible Worlds. Utopia, Dystopia, Science – Fiction, Fantasy*], Tracus Arte, Bucuresti, 2015; *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România* (ed.) [*The Encyclopaedia of Romanian Imaginaries*], 5 volumes, Iași, Polirom, 2020; *Concepte și metode în cercetarea imaginarului. Invitații Phantasma* (ed.) [*Concepts and Methods in the Study of the Imagination. The Phantasma Guests*], Iași, Polirom, 2021.

Fiction: *Noctambulii* [*Night – Walkers*], novel, Dacia, 1992, 2011; *Hidra* [*Hydra*], novel, Imago, 1996, 2011; *Oniria – jurnal de vise (1985 – 1995)* [*Oneiria. Dream Diary*], Paralela 45, 1999, 2010; *Luiza Textoris*, novel, Polirom, 2012; *Acedia – Jurnal de vise 2 (1997 – 2007)* [*Acedia. Dream Diary 2*], Polirom, 2014.