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(ABSTRACT)

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ROMULUS RUSAN. MONOGRAPHIC STUDY

(ABSTRACT)

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Romulus Rusan, Ana Blandiana, journalism, memoirs, travel diary, short prose, literary criticism, history, Sighet Memorial, monographic study.

Through the **monographic study** dedicated to the life and literary activity of the writer **Romulus Rusan** (March 13, 1935 - December 8, 2016), we aim to bring back into discussion the complex personality of the man of culture, publicist, writer, historian, as well as the essential aspects of his biography, relevant to the literary, journalistic, civic, institutional, historical activities. The historical, social, political and cultural reference is made to the second half of the twentieth century and up to the present day (through the cultural marks left by the writer and the effects of his reference work), but we will also focus on essential historical aspects that influenced the years of Romulus Rusan's childhood (1930-1950).

The novelty of this monographic study lies in the synthesis of Romulus Rusan's creative and historical research activity: the reconstruction of the publicist's profile, the configuration of the writer's portrait, the identification of the essayistic elements and structures that constitute the profile of his literary and publicistic writings and the historian-initiator and builder, together with his wife, the writer Ana Blandiana, of the Sighet Memorial, editor of the Sighet Library collections, lecturer and curator of various exhibitions on the history of communism (1993-2016). The note of innovation and specificity of this monographic approach consists in the conception of the research of Romulus Rusan's life and work, through a constant historical, social, political and cultural contextualization, with the aim of highlighting the influences of formative and historical-social events on the whole creative activity, through an in-depth

research of literary and memorial works, mainly, but also of publicist and publishing activity of recent history, as well as through the study of critical bibliography.

The theme choice arose from the need to synthesize the biographical and creative portrait of Romulus Rusan - writer, cultural journalist, historian and civically active personality, who did not enjoy a very pronounced visibility nor the proper exegetic reception extended over the whole of his creation, but who has fundamentally marked the consciousness of several generations of cultured people.

The main argument that motivates our approach is the fact that, although during the years 1960-2024, articles, studies and reviews dedicated to Romulus Rusan's writings were published by established literary critics and historians (among whom we mention Alex Ștefănescu, G. Dimisianu, Mircea Anghelescu, Eugen Simion, Dan Cristea, Mircea Zăciu, Valeriu Cristea, Dumitru Micu, Ioan Holban, Ion Pop, Mircea Popa, Dan C. Mihăilescu, Diana Vrabie), a more extensive critical study of monographic consistency, extended, unitary, on the writer's entire creation, has not been realized. Referring to the **current state of** critical research, we note numerous articles and critical exegeses, starting with *Râul ascuns*, by Virgil Ardeleanu (in "Steaua", May 1963) to Dan C. Mihăilescu's chronicle, *Viața ca un scenariu de road-movie* (in the magazine "Orizont", no.8/August 2022)¹. We can also mention the special issue of the magazine "Mișcarea literară", year XVI, no. 2-3 (62-63), 2017, a publication published in Bistrița, which brings together studies and articles by fifteen critics and professors on the work of the Sighet Memorial, as well as on the volumes of prose and travel diaries, two fragments from Romulus Rusan's memoirs (*Leaving for Venice, Fragmentary*), an interview by Octavian Silivestru about the Sighet Memorial (*The Center of Europe from where the map hangs on the nail*), a short biobibliography and a photo album - Romulus Rusan.

The choice of the topic was therefore based on three **reasons**: Firstly, the fact that, to date, a monographic study of Romulus Rusan has not been realized; secondly, the imperative need to revisit and reconfigure the writer's profile in the broad context of literary history, with the important accents given by the publication of the well-known travel diary, *America of the Grey Greyhound* (1977), of the two volumes of short prose - *Dew and Mist* (1982), *Provisional Causes* (1983) and of the trilogy, *A Journey to the Inland Sea* (volume I - 1986, volume II - 1988, volume III - 1990); thirdly, the personal motivation to focus on a local cultural personality,

¹ <https://www.blandianarusan.ro/romulus-rusan/referinte-critice/> (accessed May 13, 2024).

a writer born in Alba Iulia, who, although he lived in several cities throughout his life (Aiud, Cluj-Napoca, Bucharest, Comana), has always kept in touch with his native place.

Our **hypothesis** is that the creative destiny of a writer is influenced both by environment, family, education and certain events in the formation of personality and character, as well as by the historical, political, cultural, social context. Thus, we intend to emphasize the fact that Romulus Rusan's creative activity reflects, in addition to epigenetic, the imprint of the times, but also the timeless perspective through the creator's high vision of existence, history, religion, art: the literary works were published between 1977 - 1990, i.e. during the period marked by the oppressive signs of communism; the publishing activity was a constant of public manifestations (1954 - 2016); the historical, editorial, institutional activity was possible after the Revolution of 1989, when the conquered freedom allowed the recovery of the memory of resistance to the abuses and crimes of communism (1993-2016).

The corpus is made up of the volumes that fall within the literary field: the volumes of short prose - *Dew and Mist* (1982), *Provisional Causes* (1983) and travel diaries - *America of the Grey Greyhound* (1977), the trilogy, *A Journey to the Inland Sea* (volume I - 1986, volume II 1988, volume III 1990), as well as the volumes resulting from the publicistic activity: the literary reportage - *The Hidden River* (1963) and *Expres '65* (1964), the two volumes of interviews - *Subjective Conversations in collaboration with Ana Blandiana* (1972) and *A Discussion at the Table of Silence and Other Subjective Conversations in collaboration with Ana Blandiana* (1976). The work on film criticism and essays on filmmaking is grouped in the volumes, *La început n-a fost cuvântul. Essays on the Art and Authors of Film* (1977), *Art without Muse. Films and their witnesses* (1980), *Filmar* (1984). Also, the volume *Permis de pieton* (2000) mirrors the post-decembrist transition in social, historical, cultural articles (from 1997-2000). The posthumously published volume (2017) contains Romulus Rusan's articles on recent history, lectures and historical studies, interviews on communism: *History, Memory, Memorial or How a Miracle is Built*.

Our interest has been centered on the literary work, but the monographic nature required us to identify the specific elements of Romulus Rusan's personal destiny, the story of the couple Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan, the involvement in the collective history, as well as the publicistic activity constantly carried out by the public activity, in which we often discovered specific values of literature, as well as a perspective constantly connected to culture. The diary

fragments published posthumously by Romulus Rusan's wife, writer Ana Blandiana, will provide a substantial basis for documentation, in terms of the school years, the debut, the first meetings of the two young people, censorship and the literary background during the years of communism, the change of mentalities after 1989. Of course, the work sample also included specialized criticism, literary histories, exegeses published in specialized magazines.

The research methodology will consist in the use, individually or in combination, of several methods specific to such a monographic approach: biographical research (investigating the family life and events, the influences that have shaped the literary, journalistic and historical research work), historical contextualization (placing the writer and his work in the historical, political, cultural context of the times in order to understand the influences, the limits imposed by censorship during the communist period or creative freedom), hermeneutics (thematic, identification, ideation of literary works, highlighting stylistic elements and literary techniques), comparative analysis (comparative study of Romulus Rusan's works in relation to the works of other writers of his contemporaries or predecessors, in order to discover similarities and differences, to identify the personal vision, the original note), intertextual analysis (exploring the connections and references between the writer's writings and other literary texts, including sources of inspiration and influences of other texts), psychoanalytical approaches (applying psycho-critical theory to analyze motivations, conflicts and subconscious elements reflected in the writer's works), and the study of critical reception (to investigate how literary, journalistic, historical works have been interpreted by professional critics and other informed receivers - teachers, historians, writers, in order to identify changes in perception over time).

The scientific nature of this study is supported by the bibliography related to the theme, which contains: literary histories, studies of literary theory and criticism, critical essays, exegesis, dictionaries of mythology and symbols,, treatises on the history of art, studies of psychoanalysis and psycho-criticism, articles and reviews published in periodicals, cultural broadcasts, podcasts, documentary films, applying a personal grid of interpretation and analysis of the author's texts, as well as a selection of theoretical studies that support our interpretative directions.

The objectives of this research are multiple: the realization of a monographic study synthesizing the multiple fields of creative manifestation: literature (short prose, travel memoirs), publicity (reviews, film criticism, cultural, social, political, historical press), complemented by a

reconstruction of the life story of Romulus Rusan, the lifelong love story of the two writers, Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan, the involvement, in the last quarter of Romulus Rusan's existence, in the collective history. The literary aspect will be in the foreground of our attention, we will identify the biographical and contextual elements that interfered with the plan of literary creation, we will aim to identify the features of the travelogue and short prose, the personal vision of the writer that incorporated biographical, historical, mythological, historical, literary, literary, religious, etc. elements, personal diary fragments (published posthumously by his wife, the writer Ana Blandiana), as well as the systematization of his diverse and long publicistic activity (1954-2016), together with his public and historical activities after the 1989 Revolution.

The travel memoir will amplify the grid of interpretation, starting from the historical and political context of travels in the US and the Mediterranean countries, the reading and analysis will involve a necessary syncretism, validated by the rich ideational and bookish content, by the writer's constant references to the American free world imagined in books and films (*America of the Grey Greyhound*) and by the constant connections with Greek and Latin Antiquity, Greek, Roman and Egyptian mythology, history, the succession of civilizations, architecture, geography, music, sociology, linguistics, the history of religion and the plastic arts (trilogy - *A Voyage to the Inland Sea*). It will be necessary to activate a complex instrumentation, for the decoding and interpretation of the travel diaries we will appeal to aspects of thematic criticism, imaginary theory, philosophy, history, mythology, theory of mentalities, also using the psychocritical approach, with the aim of identifying the personal myth, combining the literary perspective, phenomenological and hermeneutic. We therefore aim to highlight the literary character of travel diaries enriched with vast cultural information, which requires a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary interpretation.

As for the structure and organization of the monographic study, it will consist of three chapters, with related sub-chapters, preceded by a table of contents and an introduction, followed by conclusions and directions for future research, information visually supported by appendices with family photographs and photographs taken during the visit to the Rusan family home, thanks to the kindness and support generously offered by Romulus Rusan's wife, the writer Ana Blandiana (April 2024), and photographs taken during the visit to the Memorial Museum of the Victims of Communism and Resistance, Sighetu Marmăției (August 2023); finally, the photographs of the diplomas of the winners of the competitions organized posthumously by the

writer Ana Blandiana, under the patronage of the Civic Academy Foundation, in collaboration with other institutions and publishers, under the aegis of Romulus Rusan (taken from the website www.blandianarusan.ro).

In the chronological order of a monographic study, the first chapter, ***ROMULUS RUSAN - A PERSONAL HISTORY AND COLLECTIVE HISTORY***, essentially reconfigures the destiny of Romulus Rusan: ***I. The second sub-chapter, The Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan couple: family history, literary projection and collective history***, presents the love relationship and the life of the couple, Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan, in the communist society and in the free world, emphasizing the fusion of the biographical in the literary plan. The earthquake of March 4, 1977 caused the couple to leave Bucharest for the village of Comana and to discover a "writing paradise", which meant a time dedicated to creation by integrating into the privileged space of nature. The third sub-chapter, ***Sighet Project - Civic Academy Foundation, International Center for the Study of Communism***, presents the changes brought about by the 1989 Revolution, which triggered a paradigm shift in the two writers' existential paradigm through civic manifestations: participation in public actions of solidarity for the real transformation of society, the establishment of the Civic Alliance, the Civic Academy Foundation, the establishment of the Memorial to Victims of Communism and Resistance, Sighetu Marmăției. Romulus Rusan has been actively involved in a very rich publishing activity (history books, memoirs, testimonies, studies, conferences, the *Book of the Dead*, etc.) dedicated to the history of communism, as director of the International Center for the Study of Communism. He also initiated the Sighet Summer School, 17 editions (1998-2014), with the aim of sharing with young people the truth of the communist persecution.

Using biography as a method of study and as sources of documentation the various diary fragments published posthumously by his wife, Ana Blandiana, grouped on the website www.blandianarusan.ro, as well as the volume *History, Memory, Memoir or How a Miracle is Built*, we selected the essential events of his childhood marked by the Second World War, adolescence and youth constrained by the establishment of communism, which created the complex of "unhealthy origin". A special role was played by the couple Ana Blandiana and Romulus Rusan, to whom we have tried to take a closer look, following how the love and devotion of the two writers created, over fifty-six years, the fertile spiritual environment for their creations, helped them to overcome the fears of a duplicitous world, the periods of prohibition or

surveillance, mirrored in Ana Blandiana's diary, *Mai-mult-ca-trecutul. Diary August 31, 1988 - December 12, 1989*, as well as in other volumes: *The Book of Dolphins, Sister World, False Treatise on Manipulation*. At the same time, together they managed not to give up in the face of opposition from certain authorities or forces of the old communist regime to the transformation of Sighet prison into the Sighet Memorial Museum, and to form a team capable of ensuring the smooth running of the museum, which has now become a place of study and discovery for thousands of Romanians and people from all over the world.

The change in the historical context after 1989 meant a real liberation from the constraints of the totalitarian system, and the newly created political situation made possible the formation of the Civic Alliance, the manifestations that created an active and involved civil society, which actively contributed to the building of genuine democracy. Together with Ana Blandiana, Romulus Rusan built a cultural and historical institution by realizing the project of the Memorial to the Victims of Communism and Resistance in Sighet. Romulus Rusan directed, from 1994 to 2016, the International Center for the Study of Communism, thus fulfilling his vocation as a researcher and historian. He has organized and coordinated educational activities, the Summer School at the Sighet Memorial, an essential component of a responsible vision of historical truth that can change mentalities. In 2006, he was a member of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, where he wrote the chapters "Chronology and Geography of Communist Repression" and "The Census of the Concentrationary Population. 1945-1989", which appeared in a volume with the same title in 2007 (Editura Academia Civică, collection "Ora de istorie", 2007)².

The writer Ana Blandiana, the person who knew him best, his companion and lifelong confidante, noted that the common element between his literary work and his historical and institutional work was his "seriousness and perfectionism", which made him a great stylist from a literary point of view, while in the field of history they determined a visionary conception of the Sighet Memorial, so that it would last and function in an optimal form (podcast *Romulus Rusan Portrait I*)³. The distinctions awarded to the writer Romulus Rusan: UNESCO Romania Prize for ethnic and confessional tolerance (November 2000), "Adrian Marino" Prize at the

² <https://www.blandianarusan.ro/romulus-rusan/biobibliografie/> (accessed February 26, 2024).

³ Cristian Pătrășconiu, *Resilience through culture. Portret Romulus Rusan I*, Spandugino Publishing House, October 29, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmuQAhFiXjA> (accessed January 5, 2024).

Gaudeamus Salon (Cluj, 2002), "Cuvântul" Magazine Prize (Bucharest, 2006) prove the recognition of his work as a historian, the social impact of the institutions created⁴.

The second chapter, **ROMULUS RUSAN - FROM SHORT STORIES TO FRONTIER LITERATURE**, being the most analytically and interpretatively rich, presents the published works of the writer in the area of literature. Starting from a historical and critical contextualization, **II.1.1. Brief historical and cultural contextualization of the '80s**, we will sketch the atmosphere of literary and cultural life, the changes imposed by the July 1971 theses, the "cultural revolution" imposed by Ceaușescu, which led to the split in the literary world: some writers obeyed official directives, while others refused the official dogmatism. We will aim to identify the features of eighties prose of neomodernism - the experiment, elaborate narrative constructions, textualization, authenticity, as well as literature open to postmodernity - fragmentarism, pastiche, irony, intertextuality, parody. All these features will be used as a grid for interpreting the short prose texts published in this period: *Dew and Mist* (1982) and *Provisional Causes* (1983).

Sub-chapter, **II.1.3. Short prose under the sign of modernity - The Dew and the Mist**, will pursue three aspects: first, social criticism in texts with subversive accents (e.g. *In the Forum, After the Wedding, Vica and the Rope*); second, the "new man" hypostases identifiable with the "states" of communist society: on the one hand, the people in power and opportunists, on the other hand, the population represented by all professional categories; thirdly, the analytical texts (e.g. *The Other, The Eye, Still Life*) built on the relationship with time, with the ages of man, the anguish of death, the dream as a way of defamation of an abyssal subconscious, as a form of knowledge of inner shadows.

The sub-chapter, **II.1.4. Humorous Texts with a Therapeutic Purpose - Provisional Causes**, will focus on the way in which the prose writer Romulus Rusan will detach himself from the falsity of inter-human relations in the urban and rural space, through irony and humor: the communist hospital (*SIS2PIP2*), the lack of food (*Time out, Urban Hen*), the split in society (*Visiting, Escalade*). Through comic situations, morals, names and language, the writer overcomes the defects of a world with an ironic, sometimes even parodic smile. We will follow the writer's way of criticizing, in a parodic register, the wooden language of the opportunists, who are part of a system of appearances, swept away by professional envy or petty collegial

⁴ *Ibid.*

pettiness. At the same time, in the volume *Provisional Causes*, we will also follow the psychological dimension of banal situations in the assiduous pursuit of the major meanings of life: the problem of identity (The *Eternal Moment*) and the psychoanalytic value of dreams (*The Telephone in a Dream*).

Subchapter **II.2. *The America of the Grey Greyhound*** is devoted to the American diary. We will elaborate some theoretical clarifications on fiction literature, non-literary texts and frontier literature (diaries, memoirs, letters), using Silvian Iosifescu's work, *Frontier Literature*, as a theoretical source, and distinguishing between the literature of testimonies and travel literature. Another work we will turn to is *United States of the Romanians. Books of Romanian Travels in America in the 20th Century* by Dorian Branea, will be useful, as the second part of the paper synthesizes the travels during the communist period - *Freedom Routes 1947-1989*. We will refer to the historical and political context, when the couple Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan went to the Iowa City Fellowship, 1973-1974, using the 2015 digital edition from LiterNet Publishing House, with the preface suggestively titled "Reflections on the Fourth Edition", as it explains the conditions under which the two writers were allowed by the communist authorities to leave the country, the saving of the manuscript from the earthquake, March 4, 1977, and the writer's intention when he planned the transfiguration of the "escape" into the American free world into the written word: The desire to offer an honest picture of America in the '70s. The American experience will mean: the university campus in Iowa City and the American province (first part) and the exhausting fifty-day route, the "Circumnavigation of America", which will involve a process of demythologizing and remythologizing American metropolises (e.g. San Francisco, Austin, Washington, New York), discovering small towns reminiscent of European civilization (Taos, Flagstaff). We will look at the inspired way in which Romulus Rusan will literally transpose the discovery of the beauty of American nature into a uniquely beautiful topos: the Grand Canyon and Niagara. At the same time, we will investigate how the "gray greyhound" becomes a companion, a "house on wheels", a space for social analysis, a place for recording observations and feverish and authentic impressions. We will review aspects of the critical reception of the well-known journal, starting with the first review by Lucian Raicu, *Reportaj și meditație*, of August 4, 1977, up to the last critical text by Dan-Liviu Boeriu, *După 50 ani. America of the Grey Greyhound*, from August 27, 2022,

(www.blandianarusan.ro), with the aim of presenting the interest of specialized critics throughout the six editions.

The next subchapter, *II.3. A Journey to the Inland Sea*, will follow "the destiny of a book without luck", as Ana Blandiana considered it, because the last volume was not published after 1990, since Romulus Rusan's interest was focused on civic manifestations and the realization of the Sighet Memorial after 1993. We will follow the typology of this travelogue, with a route planned by Romulus Rusan in order to realize this atypical book: memoir, essay on the philosophy of art and art history, since the multiple manifestations of the arts will guide the writers' pilgrimage through the thirteen countries on the Mediterranean shores. Thus, for example, the two traveling writers will discover that Vienna is not only the tradition of the Herder Prize, the official pretext for their travel, but it also is the city of music. Austria, Turkey, Greece and Egypt will be discovered culturally: history, architecture, archaeology, literature, churches and monasteries, museums, art, religion, sociological and linguistic observations. The mythologically consecrated spaces will confirm or refute their horizon of expectation, so that they will move from the bookish, mythological plane to the modern reality of the '80s. Therefore, a main thread guiding the journeys is art, as Romulus Rusan will prove, in the contemplative passages provoked by the impressive and enduring works of the creative spirit, confident in the power of art to overcome the times, models, and vain dominions of this world (**II.3.5. Plea for art as a form of survival in relation to time**).

Another important aspect that will direct the grid of interpretation is the identification of the elements of literary discourse, of literariness, which inscribes the text in travel literature (Silvian Iosifescu). Thus, the sub-chapter, **II.3.6. Literary travel - adventure, literary portraits, natural pictures**, will analyze significant fragments for the spectacular descriptions of nature, picturesque characters, specific to a mentality, a people, as well as unforeseen events or deviations from the established route, which gave the text an adventurous dimension, with suspense and dynamism. Among the characters, a special place is occupied by Pif, the symbolic car-home. The critical reception of the journey "to the inner sea" is presented in the last sub-chapter, highlighting the rich meanings of the text noted by literary critics (e.g. Mircea Angheliescu, Dan Cristea, Adrian G. Romilă, Alexandru Ruja, Diana Vrabie).

The third chapter, **ROMULUS RUSAN - THE MAN OF HIS TIME AND THE JOURNALIST BEYOND HIS TIME. MIGRATION FROM JOURNALISM TO**

CONFESIVELITERATURE, will fall within the broad area of journalism. The first subchapter, **III.1. The beginning of the publicity activity**, will follow the publicity activity of Romulus Rusan, after a historical and political contextualization of the years 1948-1989, his debut in the first year of his studies, in 1954, at the magazine "Steaua", followed by his position as editor of "Tribuna" (1957-1968), in the context of the end of the "obsessive decade", when the life of the cultural press in Cluj Napoca allowed a relative liberalization, compared to the harsh censorship control in Bucharest, as Romulus Rusan testifies in the article *Steaua and Tribuna*. The second subchapter, **III.2. Literary Reportage - The Hidden River and Express '65**, presents the texts that are marked by the influence of the official ideology (the worker, the construction site, new achievements, etc.), but the background of the reportage and the references to history, as well as the accents of the discourse in the area of literature betray the vision that the creator formed in the horizon of free culture. The texts in *The Hidden River* announce a stylist of descriptions, and in *Express '65*, the reporter portrays the world of the "ceferists" as an army, inserting meditative passages on the theme of time, symbolic characters with roles assumed in a synchronized gear, of a simplicity that mirrors defining depths.

The third sub-chapter, **III.3. Dialogues with Meaning - Cultural Interviews**, presents the two volumes of interviews realized by the couple of writers Ana Blandiana - Romulus Rusan, *Convorbiri subiective in collaboration with Ana Blandiana* (1971) and *O discuție la Masa Tăcerii și alte convorbiri subiective in collaboration with Ana Blandiana* (1976). The interviews are cultural dialogues, free from official recommendations, with personalities from the academic and artistic world, on literary, scientific, historical, film and literature topics. For example, in the first volume of interviews, Romulus Rusan evokes the portraits of Nicolae Bălcescu (*A pale guest calcă din Sicilii*), Emil Racoviță (*A ști sau a nu ști*), Lucian Blaga (*Albastrul Lancrem*), Nicolae Labiș (*Băiatul din fotografie*). Ana Blandiana debates linguistic and philosophical themes with linguist Al. Rosetti, philosopher D. D. Rosca, the Italianist A. Balaci. The second volume of democratic dialogues brings to the foreground Romulus Rusan's atypical interview, *A Discussion at the Table of Silence*, with twelve contemporary witnesses of Brâncuși (from simple people, the stonemason Ioan Alexandru, to sculptors, collaborators - for example, Mac Constantinescu, his friend and art critic, V. G. Paleologu). Also, at the end of this subchapter we have presented the interviewees posture of Romulus Rusan and Ana Blandiana, with a focus on the dialogues on the work at the Sighet Memorial.

The film, from entertainment to art, mirrors a rich activity of film criticism and film reviewing: films, directors, actors: *In the Beginning was not the word. Essays on the Art and Authors of Film* (1977), *Art without Muse. Movies and Their Witnesses* (1980) and *Filmar* (1984). His passion for film and culture has developed, over more than thirty years of activity, into a pertinent analysis, with complex cultural references of cinematographic productions, from the earliest films to the productions of the eighth decade. Romulus Rusan's interest turned to art films, watched in the 7th and 8th communist decades at the movie theaters, because he wanted to understand and delimit the valuable artistic achievements, being concerned with the great directors, with major impact in the history of film, such as, for example, Fellini, Tarkovski, Wajda. Another aspect that he has insistently returned to is the link between literature and film, the way in which screenplay manages to become an art film. We will follow Romulus Rusan's personal way of concentrating, in film critical texts, essays with a multi-artistic perspective, because film is a syncretic manifestation, which implies a multidisciplinary approach.

The last sub-chapter, **III.5 The civic, journalistic, historical activity of Romulus Rusan**, will analyze the articles published after the 1989 Revolution, with a predominantly historical, social, educational character, highlighting the importance of the attitude of civil society, capable of contributing significantly to the formation of genuine democracy by sanctioning abuses and manipulations. The articles published in "România Liberă" in the period 1997-2000, grouped in the volume *Permisul de pieton*, published in 2000, followed the deviations from a democratic conduct, from free civilization, the struggle for the implementation of European cultural values.

Therefore, the monographic study dedicated to Romulus Rusan aims to explore the significant details of Romulus Rusan's life and work, highlighting the writer, publicist, historian, in order to understand the writer's condition during the communist period, as well as the actor in the consolidation of the Romanian cultural identity. Through rigorous analysis of his literary and journalistic works, together with a research of his activity within the Civic Academy Foundation and the Memorial to the Victims of Communism and Resistance in Sighetu Marmației, this monographic approach will synthesize the complexity and importance of the legacy left by Romulus Rusan.

Thus, our research will aim to outline a portrait of the man and writer Romulus Rusan, as well as to emphasize his impact on the collective memory, offering a comprehensive perspective

on a complex intellectual destiny, a man of his time, but also a creator and thinker who overcame the limitations of society through a spiritual freedom strengthened by reading, study, research and passion for art and culture. Without claiming to carry out an exhaustive research, the essential focus will be on the area of literature and artistic values identified in short prose, travel memoirs and confessional memoirs, as well as in articles and film reviews where the "hand of the writer" is identifiable.

In this monographic study we have followed, in its essential points, the destiny of the man, writer, journalist and historian, ROMULUS RUSAN, in order to configure an enriched perspective on the complex personality of the intellectual and creator, to the extent that we have captured the internal mechanism of creation, the complexity and depth of the cultural horizon, as a constant reference point of the activities carried out throughout his life. The **conclusions of the monographic study** confirmed the initial research directions.

We consider that the monographic study *essentially* reconstructs the biography and the historian's contribution to the authentic shaping of recent collective history and, *fundamentally*, the writer's profile, our approach being a hopefully significant attempt to position him in the family of writers who have left behind "at least one masterpiece", paraphrasing Romulus Rusan's words: "But, above all, he gave us - something unusual - a masterpiece."⁵ (from the review entitled *Capodopera*, dedicated, *in memoriam*, to the actor and director, Jean Georgescu). Without subjective exaggerations, with an objective tone, relying also on the interpretations of literary critics, we can state that Romulus Rusan's name remains linked for most readers and literary critics with the famous diary, *America of the Grey Greyhound*, although the trilogy *A Journey to the Inland Sea*, which received less critical reception and less public interest, since history occupied everyone's attention in the '90s, is a much more complex and richer in meaning writing, not deserving to be marginalized.

Therefore, prose and travel literature positions Romulus Rusan among the authentic writers of Romanian literary history in the second half of the 20th century. The republication, by Spandugino Publishing House, in 2019-2022, in the Distinguo collection, of the main volumes (literary interviews, short prose and travel diaries, film chronicles, volumes of articles, conferences, interviews on historical topics) signed by Romulus Rusan, betrays the interest of readers and specialized critics, from the second and third centuries of the 21st century.

⁵ Romulus Rusan, *Art without Muse*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1980, p. 94.

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