Facultatea de
Ştiinţe Umaniste şi Sociale

INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL SCHOOL

SCIENTIFIC SESSION OF PhD CANDIDATES IN THE FIELD OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

November 10th – 11th, 2026

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Assist. Dan Andrei RĂDULESCU, PhD cand. (Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania)

Day 1 - 10.11.2026

Participants` arrival

9.45 – 10.00 – Opening Ceremony (Room 230)

Welcome speech of:

Dr.habil. Ramona LILE - Rector of "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad

Prof. Florentina MUNTEANU, PhD, Head of the Doctoral School

Assoc. Prof. Alina PĂDUREAN, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

ONLINE ACCESS TO THE OPENING SPEECHES AND PHILOLOGY PANEL

Alina Padurean is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Sesiune doctoranzi

Time: Nov 10, 2026 09:00 AM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us05web.zoom.us/j/7661251789?pwd=vqbi9bNhbnp9xHf0cL01u7g5lsaxh7.1&omn=88309942976

Join and take notes

https://us05web.zoom.us/j/7661251789?pwd=vqbi9bNhbnp9xHf0cL01u7g5lsaxh7.1&omn=88309942976&mynotes=on

Meeting ID: 766 125 1789

Passcode: 1234

Day 1, 10.11.2026, Room 230

PANEL 1 PHILOLOGY

Chair: Prof. Ciprian VĂLCAN, PhD

Keynote Speakers:

10.00 – 10.30 – Prof.univ.dr.habil Dana PERCEC, West University of Timișoara, Romania, **Hybridity and Posthumanistic Ethics in Contemporary Gothic Fairy Tales: Angela Carter and Wolf Stories**

10.30 – 11.00 – Irma CARANANNTE, University L`Orientale, Napoli, Italy, **"Love is strong as Death": The Shulammite Figure in the Poetry of Paul Celan and Benjamin Fondane**

11.00– 11.30 – Assoc.Prof. Luiza Caraivan, PhD, West University of Timișoara, Romania, **Translating Cultural Terms from Romanian into English: A Study of Official Romanian Tourism Websites**

11.30 – 12.00 – Ioana Iacob, literary critic, Timișoara, Romania, **The Ethics of Uncomfortable Truth: Marta Petreu`s Reinterpretation of the 1927 Generation**

PAPER PRESENTATIONS

CHAIRS:

Prof.habil. Florica BODIȘTEAN, PhD

Prof.habil. Carmen NEAMȚU, PhD

12.00-12.15 - *What to Keep, What to Cut: The Art and Logic of Literary Adaptation,* PhD Candidate Denisa Radu, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Abstract: Literary adaptation involves a complex process of selection, interpretation, and transformation in which the narrative, thematic, and aesthetic elements of a written work must be considered within the possibilities and constraints of cinema. While some literary works inspire multiple screen adaptations, others remain largely unexplored by filmmakers. This raises an important question: what makes a literary work suitable for cinematic adaptation, and how do filmmakers determine which elements are essential to preserve and which can be omitted, condensed, or transformed? This paper proposes a comparative examination of two novels by German writer Michael Ende, The Neverending Story (1979) and Momo (1973), and two novels by Romanian writer Răzvan Rădulescu Teodosie cel Mic (2006) and Viața și faptele lui Ilie Cazane (1997). By bringing thee works into dialogue, the study seeks to explore the relationship between literary complexity, narrative structure, thematic significance, and cinematic adaptability. Particular attention will be paid to the different ways in which narrative elements contribute to a work's identity and to the challenges involved in transferring these elements from the written page to the screen. Rather than approaching adaptation primarily through the criterion of fidelity to the source text, the paper considers it a process of interpretative decision-making. The omission of a character, the compression of a narrative episode, or the transformation of a thematic motif may alter not only the structure of a story but also its meaning and emotional impact. At the same time, preserving every element of a literary work may prove impractical or even counterproductive within the cinematic medium. By comparing works with different adaptation histories and narrative characteristics, this paper aims to investigate the criteria through which certain literary elements acquire greater significance not as a question of what must remain unchanged, but as a negotiation between literary intention, cinematic expression, and the preservation of a work's essential meaning.

Keywords: literary adaptation, fidelity and transformation, film, intermediality, creative transformation.

12.15-12.30 – *Comparison in Andrei Bodiu's poems,* PhD Candidate *Diana-Alexandra Dragoman*, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Abstract: In contemporary Romanian poetry, comparison is one of the most prominent figures of speech; examining it offers a way to observe how affective processes are layered within a text. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that — given the transitive nature of Andrei Bodiu's poetry — it is possible to classify comparison and, by extension, to establish connections between the the subject being compared and the term of comparison. These stylistic junctures entail abandoning the mask of non-affectivity and the detachment from the text. Using the case study, this research reveals that there are various factors that generate comparison and that a comparison, in turn, can trigger a textual metaphor. The act of comparison simultaneously expresses semantic preferences, which, at a subtextual level, reveal a subjective attitude toward reality.

Keywords: Andrei Bodiu, comparison, poetry, stylistics, subtext.

12.30-12.45 - *Public Service Interpreter Training in the UK: A Thematic Review of Qualifications, Standards and Educational Provision*, PhD Candidate Iasmina Velimirovici, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Abstract: Research on public service interpreter (PSI) education in the UK has examined how vocational training, university provision, professional qualifications and occupational standards relate to one another. This presentation brings together contributions to that discussion. It draws on De Pedro Ricoy's (2010) account of interpreter training, D'Hayer's (2013) discussion of PSI education, Guéry's (2014) study of professional practice, and Sanchez and Elgindy's (2025) survey of postgraduate translation and interpreting programmes. The focus is on the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting, the National Occupational Standards in Interpreting, and the roles of Further and Higher Education. The presentation considers how professional requirements have informed course design, practical training and assessment. It also discusses issues raised in the literature, including access to training, differences between vocational and university-based provision, and the limits of qualification-led approaches. It concludes by considering what research tells us, and what remains unclear, about preparing interpreters for public service work.

Keywords: public service interpreting, interpreter training, professional qualifications, occupational standards, educational provision

12.45-13.00 - *Fictions of Consciousness: Truth and Memory in Italo Svevo,* PhD Candidate Alin Armando Artion**,** "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: La coscienza di Zeno can be read as a novel of psychoanalysis, illness, or inettitudine, yet these approaches converge on a more radical problem: the status of truth when the self becomes its own narrator. This article proposes a reading of Svevo's novel centred on the split between the narrating I and the narrated I, and on the unreliability of a confession constructed retrospectively. Zeno is unreliable not simply because he lies. Memory selects, time rearranges, language filters, and the psychoanalytic setting introduces an addressee who alters the patient's discourse from within. Moreover, Doctor S., the apparent guarantor of interpretation, compromises the authority of that framework by publishing the manuscript out of revenge. The analysis distinguishes between the thematically organised autobiographical memoir and the explicitly diary-like final section, examines the unstable relation between illness and health, and reconsiders the category of the inetto. Finally, the afterlives of the Zeno model in Italian fiction of the 1960s allow us to describe a 'Zeno function' that exceeds direct intertextual influence: a form of narrative subjectivity in which truth does not disappear, but becomes mediated, provisional, and contestable.

Keywords: Italo Svevo; La coscienza di Zeno; narrating I; narrated I; unreliable narrator; psychoanalysis; modernism; memory.

13.00-13.15 – *THE SACRED AND GNOSTIC INFLUENCE IN MIRCEA CĂRTĂRESCU'S SOLENOID,* PhD Candidate Andreea Onea, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: For Mircea Cărtărescu, the act of writing is a form of gnosis — a salvation through knowledge. The author acts as a Demiurge who deliberately multiplies the layers of reality by creating a material world that serves merely as a reflection, behind which lies a higher spiritual reality. By awakening from a state of oblivion and remembering his origin through anamnesis, the character transcends the framework of the physical world to connect with eternity. This total knowledge dissolves physical reality, rendering the body a prison of the spirit — a painful inner exile from which the divine spark must be liberated at all costs. And how else can such a complete

liberation be attained if not through gnosis? Thus, in Solenoid, Mircea Cărtărescu weaves together scientific theories, biological degradation, dreams, hallucinations, metaphysical portals, and Christian apocrypha in pursuit of enlightenment. His vision is, as the author himself attests, "a sort of Gnostic Gospel".

Keywords: knowledge, damnation, salvation, enlightenment, transcendent, spirit.

13.15-13.30 – *A House That Remembers: Gothic Narration, the Embedded Diary and Diasporic Belonging in Shubnum Khan's The Djinn Waits a Hundred Years,* PhD Candidate Bogdan Andrei, West University of Timișoara, Romania.

Abstract: Shubnum Khan's The Djinn Waits a Hundred Years (2024) is a novel about a crumbling mansion on the coast of Durban named Akbar Manzil. The paper presents the analysis of this book's narrative techniques that bring to bear on the central plot, a family of fifteen-year-old Sana and her grieving father who have moved to the mansion, which is now a boarding house for eccentric residents. While investigating this community, Sana finds the diary of Meena, the second wife of Akbar Ali Khan, who has built his sugar empire and the mansion in Bombay in 1919. The paper claims that Khan uses three narrative techniques to tell the story of Akbar Manzil and its inhabitants and their descendants, the diary as a medium to recover a silent woman's voice through the lens of Sana's perceptions. In addition, the djinn, the supernatural figure who has been observing the events with grief and partial knowledge, and the house itself with its ghosts, artifacts, and dreams are used to create links between the timelines and narrative layers. The paper analyses these techniques with reference to the discourse of the Gothic and magical realism, demonstrating how the author creates the sense of the real in her fictional world. By extension, it recovers the theme of belonging and its representation in the immigrant experience in South Africa, which appears in the narrative as a process of reading and rereading the past. Thus, the paper concludes that Shubnum Khan's debut novel innovates the contemporary South African literature by transcending the binary discourse of black and white.

Keywords: contemporary South African fiction; Indian diaspora; Gothic; magical realism; embedded narrative; Shubnum Khan

13.30-13.45 - *The Stories We Tell to Survive: Unreliable Memory and White Self-Deception in Karen Jennings's Crooked Seeds,* PhD Candidate Bogdan Andrei, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Abstract: This paper aims to discuss how in Karen Jennings's novel Crooked Seeds (2023), where memory is repressed into a problematic narrative source. Set in Cape Town stricken by a water and electricity crisis, the plot revolves around Deidre van Deventer, a white woman in her fifties, living in the crumbling public housing. As the police investigators dig out the remains from her childhood home, Deidre is pressed to recall her late brother's alleged involvement in the pro-apartheid group that plotted attacks on ANC and MK activists in the run-up to the 1994 elections. Having lost her leg in one of his explosions, Deidre denies any knowledge of his activities. This paper will argue that Jennings's novel constructs its meaning through denial. By reading of the narrative's formal techniques, the paper will demonstrate how the author tells the story of White South Africans who want to repress their role in the country's racist past. First of all, with reference to flashbacks as the tool for the unreliable focaliser to unveil the repressed memories, the paper will analyse the way in which the author uses the first person singular to narrate the events that happened before the story's temporal frame. Secondly, the paper will comment on the choice of the author's language and the way in which she withholds the information from the reader. Thirdly, the paper will discuss the author's conclusion to show that the unreliable focaliser allows her to expose the self-protective mythmaking of the whole community. By that, the paper will demonstrate that Jennings's novel fits into the tradition of recent South African literature that questions the ability of truth commissions to heal the national memory.

Keywords: contemporary South African fiction; unreliable narration; memory; whiteness; complicity; Karen Jennings

13.45-14.00 - *Social Conditions and the Destruction of Identity: A Comparative Study of Dorian Gray and Martin Eden,* PhD Candidate Snizhana Sihaieva, West University of Timișoara, Romania.

Abstract: This paper investigates the mechanisms through which dominant social conditions and ideological frameworks determine personal disintegration in late 19th- and early 20th-century literature. Focusing on Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray and Jack London's Martin Eden, the study bridges British aestheticism and American naturalism to uncover an underlying, invariant structure of identity collapse. Rather than treating the

protagonists as autonomous psychological types, the research approaches them as social constructs shaped by their class positions and internalized values. Drawing upon socio-critical theory, particularly Karl Marx's commodity fetishism, Émile Durkheim's anomie, and Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism, the paper traces a shared three-stage destructive trajectory: ideological capture, commodification, and collapse. Special attention is given to the textual catalysts of this process: J.K. Huysmans's À rebours and Herbert Spencer's First Principles, which function as material conduits transforming external class doctrines into personal existential scripts. Furthermore, the study contrasts the cultural specificity of these systemic forces: the escapist cult of outward form in late-Victorian England versus the Social Darwinist cult of individual power in Gilded-Age America. The findings demonstrate that both tragedies stem not from personal moral failure, but from the lethal internalization of toxic systemic values.

14.00-14.15 – *Dimensions of the strigoi myth in Romanian folklore: from genesis and typology to communal manifestations and rituals of annihilation,* PhD Candidate Stefan Živojinović, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Abstract: This is a study with a close view on the strigoi motif in Romanian folklore, with its meaning in the traditional culture of agriculture. In the border between life and death, hovering like a moth, the strigoi is a disruptive presence, a restless cosmological element that does not transition after its death endangering the cosmic order and the stability of the local community. Using ethnological models, we place these beings in two major types: the living strigoi, who are projecting their souls out of their bodies, and the dead revenants who quit their graves to cause disaster to their families. Within these beliefs, the strigoi is not an ordinary bloodsucker, but a thief of „mana", the vital force that feeds up plants, encompasses milk pails, and support human health. The paper also savagely analyses the community responses to this cosmic peril, stressing the plethora of the apotropaic reactions that escalate from preventative funerary practices (garlic use, sealing of bodily orifices) to extreme post-mortem immolation (exhume, stake, decapitate, and burn the corpse). The strigoi myth offered agrarian communities a way to make sense of hardship, face their fears, and rebuild a sense of order when life spun out of control.

Keywords: Romanian folklore, Strigoi, Revenants, Mana (Vital force), Apotropaic practices, Funerary practices, Agrarian culture

14.15 – 14.30 - *The romance genre: from its cultural and literary origins to the development of the modern form,* PhD Candidate Anamaria Rotaru, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: This article aims to outline a theoretical profile of the romance genre by summarising the main contributions in the scholarly literature devoted to its definition, evolution and distinctive features. The research is based on the premise that the romance genre is a complex literary phenomenon, whose identity has gradually taken shape through the interaction between cultural and literary traditions, value systems and narrative conventions. In this regard, the research aims to bring together and correlate complementary theoretical perspectives drawn from specialist studies and articles that address different dimensions of the genre, none of which, taken individually, offers an exhaustive view of it. The analysis highlights the key conceptual frameworks that enable an understanding of the defining features of the romance genre, its narrative mechanisms and the dynamics of the transformations through which it redefines its conventions in relation to cultural and ideological changes. By synthesising these perspectives, the study provides an overview of the literary identity of the romance genre, identifying both the elements of continuity that ensure its recognisability and its capacity to adapt to new sensibilities and representations of love.

Keywords: Christianity, patriarchy, feminism, love story, heroine, alpha/beta male, happily ever after

14.30-14.45 - *The Poet as Healer: Traian Dorz and the Therapeutic Mission of the Word,* PhD Candidate Simona Avram, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract: The present paper addresses the poetic as a tool for healing the lost soul, with particular reference to the work of Traian Dorz. The poet belongs to the Lord's Army (Oastea Domnului) communion, which is part of the Romanian Orthodox belief system, and for him, poetry was an exercise in spiritual alchemy. We start with the problematic formulation of what qualities should a poet possess to be able to reorientate the soul in the modern maze of life. In order to answer this query, the paper first analyses the poet's formation, i.e., both philological and theological education, which instilled in him the need to serve the higher power through writing. Further, the poetic language of Traian Dorz is examined as an intermediary between the sacred and the profane. For this purpose, the paper turns to the concepts of Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade concerning the phenomenon of the holy and the difference between the sacred and profane. In addition, critical discourse analysis of Mina Rusu's Poetica sacrului

is used to explore the poetic as a phenomenon of sacred literature. Finally, the paper dwells on the topic of inspiration and writing as a means of transmitting spiritual experience from the poet to the reader. It concludes that in the poetry of Traian Dorz, the readers can find answers to their questions about their own loneliness, disappointment, and longing, as well as build a new identity on the foundations of faith and sacred values. In this aspect, the paper presents the poetic language of Traian Dorz as a tool for healing and building the soul.

Keywords: Traian Dorz; religious poetry; the sacred and the profane; Mircea Eliade; Rudolf Otto; identity

14.45 – 15.00 - *From the Cave of Shadows to the Light: the Search for the Lost Self in the Poetry of Traian Dorz,* PhD Candidate Simona Avram, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract: This paper aims to explore the religious poetry of Traian Dorz through the prism of one of the most ancient conceptions of human bondage, expressed in Plato's allegory of the cave. In the Republic, Plato describes caged people who mistake shadows for reality, until one among them escapes and sees the reality. In a similar way, the paper tries to demonstrate how the author of the religious poetry of the Lord's Army (Oastea Domnului) addresses the readers to the metaphysical plain of being in God. In Symposium, Plato presents another myth of immense religious significance, the myth of androgyne. The androgyne is a single soul that has been split into two, and it longs to return to itself. Reading Plato's dialogues, one can witness how the ancient Greek philosopher thinks about the loss of spiritual wholeness as a form of human bondage. The first part of the paper will present this ancient conception. The second part will focus on the religious poetry of Dorz, trying to reveal how his verses build a narrative of salvation from the bondage of lost identity, leading the readers from darkness to light, from loneliness to communion. It is assumed that Plato's myth of androgyne and allegory of the cave have impacted the writer's imagination. However, instead of trying to prove a direct connection, the paper will simply rely on close reading to demonstrate how the religious poetry of Dorz reinterprets Plato's ideas in Christianity. Conclusively, it will be argued that, in effect, Dorz's verses invite the readers to return to themselves, to come to God, the only source of truth, love, and salvation from the bondage of lost identity.

Keywords: Traian Dorz; Plato; allegory of the cave; androgyne myth; identity; religious poetry

15.00 – 15.15 - *Religious Language: Linguistic and Stylistic Features,* PhD Candidate Ciure(Pîlșu) Crinela-Eleonora, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: Religious language in the nineteenth-century Romanian confessional press constitutes a subject of considerable linguistic and historiographical significance, as it offers valuable insights into the ways in which ecclesiastical institutions contributed to the formation of public opinion within a politically constrained environment. In the case of Biserica și Școala (Church and School), a periodical established in Arad in 1877 under the auspices of the Orthodox Diocese, the distinctive features of this language acquire particular significance against the backdrop of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, when Hungarian legislation governing the press, education, and public administration imposed substantial restrictions on the public use of the Romanian language. The present study investigates the defining characteristics of the periodical's religious and journalistic discourse, examining the ways in which ecclesiastical rhetoric was incorporated and adapted in editorials, educational chronicles, and morally instructive texts intended for an audience comprising clergy, teachers, and members of the Orthodox faithful in both rural and urban communities. Drawing upon Alexandru Andriescu's observations on the language of the Romanian press during the modern period, the analysis demonstrates that the religious discourse employed by the Arad-based periodical functioned as a distinctive mode of communication through which the diocesan authorities conveyed interpretations of contemporary political developments within a conceptual framework in which confessional affiliation and national identity were mutually reinforcing. The findings suggest that the distinctive nature of religious language in Biserica și Școala resides in its capacity to mediate between canonical norms and the concerns of the public sphere, thereby compensating for the limited political representation of Romanians within the Dual Monarchy. In this context, religious discourse fulfilled informative, educational, and identity-forming functions, addressing communities subjected to sustained political pressure.

Keywords: religious and journalistic discourse; Transylvanian confessional press; Biserica și Școala; ecclesiastical rhetoric; Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy.

15.15 – 15.30 - *The importance of literature in the English textbooks used in Romanian schools,* PhD Candidate Daniela Fercea, West University of Timișoara, Romania.

Abstract: Our purpose in this study is to highlight children's literature as an available resource to both teachers and students that will aid them in studying various aspects of a foreign language, in this case English. However, the emphasis falls most heavily on knowing and understanding the Romanian education system, concerning the publishing of English textbooks. The study that I intend to conduct argues for integrating children's literature and literary theory-based discussions within the English classes in Romanian schools, and not only, in order to enhance knowledge, creativity, motivation to learn, open-mindedness and understanding of other cultures and civilizations. In this perspective, I examined a representative collection of English textbooks published for the Romanian education system, in order to detect differences and similarities of a certain teaching approach, mainly based on learning about language through children's literature. I concentrated my analysis on how different literature excerpts are being integrated in these textbooks as a method of enhancing appreciation and understanding of language beyond concern for proper usage.

Keywords: children's literature; English textbooks; foreign language; English classes; Romanian schools.

15.30 – 15.45 - *ONTOLOGÍA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, Saber ancestral, ser vital y hacer integral, una reflexión desde el abrazo de la serpiente*, PhD Candidate Diana Marcela Mayorga Valencia, Technological University of Pereira

Abstract: This chapter explores the relationship between ancestral wisdom and the understanding of being, based on an analysis of the film El abrazo de la serpiente (2015). Through a philosophical approach influenced by Martin Heidegger and Latin American thinkers such as Rodolfo Kusch, Fornet-Betancur, Ernildo Stein, the text examines how the indigenous worldview, represented by the character Karamakate, offers an alternative to the technological, epistemic and specialized of contemporary society. The discussion focuses on the concepts of connection, vitality and sense of being as fundamental elements for an integral understanding of human existence and its relationship with nature. This reflection seeks to contribute to the debate on the role of ancestral knowledge in Latin American education and its potential to counteract the alienation of modernity.

Keywords: be, ancestral knowledge, ontology of education, connection, philosophy.

15.45 – 16.00 - *Performative Practices in the Traditional Music of the Banat Bulgarians: Ensembles and Musical Groups,* PhD Candidate Lavinia Sorana Gruescu, University of Oradea, Romania

Abstract: This paper examines the performative practices associated with the traditional music of the Banat Bulgarians. It explores the role of ensembles and musical groups in preserving and transmitting the musical repertoire. The analysis considers contexts such as community celebrations, festivals, and cultural events. The repertoire is examined in relation to dance, traditional costume, and ethnic identity. Particular emphasis is placed on performance characteristics and forms of stage presentation. Ensembles contribute to the promotion of traditions and the strengthening of community cohesion. At the same time, their activities facilitate the transmission of cultural heritage to younger generations. The adaptation of the repertoire for the stage highlights the dynamic relationship between tradition and contemporary contexts. Through participation in cultural events, these groups increase the visibility of the Banat Bulgarian community. The paper underscores the importance of these practices for the continuity of musical heritage.

Keywords: Banat Bulgarians, traditional music, performative practices, ensembles, musical groups, musical heritage.

16.00 – FINAL REMARKS & NETWORKING

PANEL 2 THEOLOGY, November 11

CHAIRS: Prof. Marcel MĂCELARU, PhD

Prof. Corneliu SIMUȚ, PhD

Assoc.Prof. Daniel OPREAN, PhD

Invite link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82709964135?pwd=G2JtauLClDEIbcOQeStxib1n6KLE55.1

Meeting ID: 827 0996 4135

Passcode: 344016

10.00-10.15 - *The Lord is my refuge: Metaphors of Safety, Trust, and Hope in the Psalter,* PhD Candidate Călin Onițiu, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: This article explores how the ancient psalmists experienced God's living reality as a refuge amid their struggles, crises, and vulnerability. By examining these images as strongholds, rocks, and fortresses, the study investigates how these biblical writers articulated their own deliverance through intimate reliance on God. It also examines how these canonical texts describe God's presence as a place of safety, covenantal trust, and expectant hope. Ultimately, the paper will explore how engaging the psalmists' lived faith can transform personal distress into enduring holistic resilience.

Keywords: Psalms, Lord, refuge, stronghold, rock, fortresses, help, strength

10.15-10.30 - *Education as an Infrastructure for Socio-Economic Integration: between Personal Development, Social Mobility And Community Responsibility,* PhD Candidate Stamatie Constantin, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania

Abstract: In contemporary societies, education is often assessed through academic achievement, qualifications, graduation rates, and labour-market integration. While relevant, these indicators are insufficient to capture the complexity of socio-economic integration, which also requires the capacity to participate competently, autonomously, and responsibly in social and community life. This article proposes an interdisciplinary approach to education at the intersection of educational sciences, psychology, sociology, economics, and theology. Its central argument is that education constitutes an infrastructure for integration, developing the cognitive, socio-emotional, professional, and axiological resources needed for active social participation. The analysis examines education's contribution to social mobility, the role of socio-emotional competencies, the importance of family and community, and the need for a holistic understanding of human development. The Christian perspective, emphasizing personal development, character formation, and service, is brought into dialogue with contemporary research as an anthropological and axiological framework. The article argues that education policies oriented towards integration should promote not only access to education, but also belonging, competence, autonomy, employability, and social responsibility.

Keywords: education; socio-economic integration; social mobility; inclusion; human capital; socio-emotional competencies; holistic development; Christian education.

10.30-10.45 – *What is Creation in relation to God, and what is humanity's vocation within it?,* PhD Candidate Adrian Popa, "1 Decembrie 1918" University, Alba Iulia, Romania

Abstract: The degradation of the natural environment and the disruption of climatic balances constitute one of the most complex challenges facing the contemporary world, with their effects extending to every dimension of human society. In this context, whereas before the mid-twentieth century, questions concerning the cosmos, nature, and humanity's place within the created world were generally understood and addressed as secondary aspects of established theological disciplines, in recent decades, the relationship between humanity and the natural environment has gained increasing prominence in theological research. Ecotheology, as a distinct branch of

contextual theology, seeks to provide an explicit and contemporary response to the question: "What is creation in relation to God, and what is humanity's vocation within it?" Its purpose is not to establish a framework for environmental ethics, but rather to connect the resolution of the ecological crisis with a proper understanding of humanity's identity and vocation as both an integral part and the crowning achievement of the created world and, above all, as the priest of creation.

Keywords: ecotheology, ideology, ecumenism, community of creation, dominion, stewardship, servant species, priest of creation, transfiguration

10.45-11.00 – *Moral Formation and the Exercise of Social Authority in Ezra-Nehemiah,* PhD Candidate Fakhrodin Shafaati, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: The relationship between moral formation and the exercise of social authority is one of the important issues in the study of religious and social reforms in Ezra-Nehemiah. Previous studies have examined the role of the Law, collective identity, and the legitimacy of authority in this work. However, a comparative examination of the reform narratives can contribute to a more precise understanding of the relationship between morality and power in this text. The main research question of this study is: What is the relationship between moral formation and the exercise of social authority in the representation of reforms in Ezra-Nehemiah? To answer this question, the reform narratives of this work are compared with one another. This study is based on the method of comparative narrative analysis and a close reading of the Hebrew text. The socio-historical context is also taken into consideration in the interpretation of the narratives. The final aim of this study is to provide a text-based analysis of the relationship between morality and authority in the reform narratives of Ezra-Nehemiah.

Keywords: Ezra-Nehemiah; Moral Formation; Social Authority; Religious Reforms; the Law.

11.00-11.15 - *The Revitalisation of Sunday School in the Romanian Pentecostal Context: From Passive Participation to Active Involvement of the Current Generation*, PhD Candidate Vasile Prială," Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: In the context of contemporary society, characterised by the development of digital technology, the influence of social media and the increasing variety of challenges faced by children and adolescents, Sunday School within the Romanian Pentecostal community is called upon to reassess its educational methods and strategies. Whilst in previous generations a predominantly receptive approach to participation may have contributed to spiritual formation, the current generation requires forms of active engagement, concrete motivations and a diverse range of projects relevant to their realities. This paper highlights the need to revitalise Sunday School through interactive activities, more effective teaching and the appropriate training of teachers. At the same time, it emphasises the responsibility of leaders and ministry teams to develop educational solutions tailored to contemporary challenges. Parents have a vital role to play; they must be equipped and encouraged to become involved in their children's spiritual formation, in close collaboration with Sunday School leaders and teachers. Diversifying programmes and strengthening the partnership between family and church can offer children and teenagers constructive alternatives to excessive use of technology and opportunities to apply biblical principles in everyday life. Through an integrated approach, Sunday School can become a meaningful space for spiritual, moral and social formation, preparing the new generation to face the challenges of the contemporary world with discernment.

11.15-11.30 - *The Transcendence of God as a Constitutive Dimension of His Relationship with The World,* PhD Candidate Florin Ludușan, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: This article aims to examine the transcendence of God as a constitutive dimension of His relationship with the created world, highlighting the theological significance and practical implications of this fundamental reality for human faith and existence. The study begins with an analysis of the conceptual framework of divine transcendence, seeking to delineate its doctrinal meanings and clarify the relationship between transcendence and immanence. This relationship is approached from the perspective of the ontological distinction between Creator and creation, without excluding God's presence and activity in the world. An important part of the study is devoted to examining the biblical foundations of divine transcendence through the interpretation of relevant scriptural passages addressing God's holiness, sovereignty, and otherness. On this basis, the article analyzes the traditional model of transcendence, as well as two representative perspectives from modern theological and philosophical thought: Karl Barth's conception, centered on the sovereignty of divine revelation, and Søren Kierkegaard's approach, which emphasizes the qualitative difference between God and human beings. The comparative analysis

seeks to identify the convergences and distinctive features of these models in their understanding of the relationship between God and the world. In its final section, the study highlights the practical consequences of divine transcendence for human life, particularly in the areas of worship, prayer, moral responsibility, and the believer's relationship with God. The article argues that affirming divine transcendence does not necessarily entail God's withdrawal from creation; rather, it can provide the foundation for an authentic relationship characterized by faith, reverence, and obedience.

Keywords: divine transcendence, immanence, biblical revelation, Creator and creation, Karl Barth, Søren Kierkegaard, religious practices.

11.30-11.45 - *Reconcilierea în Matei 5:21–26. Fundamente exegetice, teologice și implicații pastorale,* PhD Candidate Paul Ionașcu, Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: În articolul de față ne propunem să analizăm conceptul reconcilierii în Matei 5:21-26, precum și în contextul mai larg al Predicii de pe Munte. Urmărim fundamentarea exegetică și teologică a acestui concept, evidențiind totodată relevanța sa pentru practica pastorală contemporană. Pornind de la porunca veterotestamentară „să nu ucizi" și de la interpretarea sa preponderent exterioară, formalistă, în tradiția iudaică, vom arăta cum Domnul Hristos mută accentul de pe actul în sine pe atitudinea interioară și pe comportamentul verbal, care pot afecta relațiile interpersonale în cadrul Bisericii. Analiza se va concentra asupra a trei aspecte principale pe care textul le evidențiază: (1) identificarea rădăcinii conflictului, (2) prioritatea reconcilierii și (3) urgența reconcilierii, în lumina consecințelor sale atât prezente, cât și escatologice. În plan pastoral, vom urmări implicațiile pericopei pentru gestionarea conflictului atât în familie, cât și în Biserică, subliniind necesitatea inițiativei personale și a dorinței de reconciliere.

Keywords: reconciliere, Predica de pe Munte, Matei 5:21-26, teologie pastorală, exegeză

11.45-12.00 - *Consequentialism and Social Impact,* Ph.D. Candidate Onița Ivașcu Maria Daniela, Technical University of Cluj Napoca, Romania

Abstract: Consequentialism is an ethical theory according to which the moral value of an action depends exclusively on its consequences. In the context of social impact, this philosophy requires that projects, policies, and public or private initiatives be evaluated on the basis of the actual net benefit they generate for society. When applied to social impact, the primary objective becomes maximizing collective well-being and bringing about tangible improvements in the living conditions of a community. This approach shifts the focus away from the intentions of those who act or compliance with absolute rules, towards maximizing collective well-being and addressing global challenges in practical terms. Furthermore, consequentialism is a theory of obligation or right action and is compatible with a wide range of different theories of value. In all its forms, consequentialism conceives of morality as the production of states of affairs that possess value and maintains that this value can be defined entirely in agent-neutral terms.

Keywords: utilitarianism, consequentialism, outcome-based ethics, maximization of the good, ethical altruism.

12.00-12.30 – Lunch break

12.30-12.45 – *The Christ-Centered Pedagogical Model in Discipleship Formation: A Narrative-Didactic Analysis of the Gospels and Their Contemporary Relevance,* PhD Candidate Lorena Sfercoci, Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: This article undertakes a rigorous narrative-didactic analysis of the pedagogical model employed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the formation of His disciples, highlighting how the Christological paradigm transcends a strictly transmissive-cognitive approach and constitutes a pedagogy of ontological transformation and character formation. Moving beyond reductionist perceptions in secular literature, which have minimized Jesus Christ's teaching status on account of the lack of institutional validation within the rabbinical schools of His time, this study re-evaluates His magisterial authority as deriving directly from His divine nature, from the perfect symbiosis between word and deed (logos and praxis), and from His absolute knowledge of human ontology. The

analysis demonstrates that the process of discipleship formation is gradual, participatory, and oriented toward the transformation of discernment and conduct, while the transmission of teaching remains inseparable from its practical embodiment. By correlating the biblical text with the didactic principles systematized by Jan Amos Comenius, the study identifies the epistemological foundations of teaching and the formative didactic strategies employed by Christ (didactic discourse, the parable, Socratic-heuristic dialogue, the demonstrative lesson, and Aramaic poetic mnemonic techniques). The contemporary relevance of this model is articulated analogically and critically: the Gospel narratives provide a foundation for reflection on dialogue, experiential learning, formative assessment, and character education, without replacing contemporary pedagogical foundations or disregarding the theological context of the narratives. Finally, the paper connects Christ's magisterium with the challenges facing contemporary pre-university education (secularization, pluralism, and excessive formalization), proposing a reconceptualization of Christian apologetics as a formative paradigm and the development of an integrative competence in Christian apologetics, while upholding freedom of conscience unconditionally.

Keywords: Christ-centered pedagogy, formative strategy, Christian apologetics

12.45-13.00 – *Abortion – A Pentecostal Perspective,* PhD Candidate Alin Boloca, Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: The sanctity of human life emerges as a significant theme within biblical literature, particularly evident in foundational texts such as Psalm 139:13–18, which affirm the divine's intimate involvement in the formation of human beings. The Scriptures underscore a divine mastery in the act of creation, conveying a profound regard for the individual personhood bestowed by God, thereby suggesting that life commences at conception. In the Christian tradition, particularly among Pentecostal theologians, the understanding of human life is intricately linked to the work of the Holy Spirit. Scholars contend that the Holy Spirit serves a pivotal role in elucidating the truth of Scripture and in guiding believers through the discernment of moral dilemmas, including issues pertaining to life and abortion. The empowerment provided by the Holy Spirit enables believers to adopt a pro-life stance, actively opposing societal norms that may undermine the intrinsic value of human existence. The biblical perspective on abortion and human life is inherently multifaceted, deeply grounded in Scriptural exegesis and further illuminated by the teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit. A comprehensive understanding of life, as intricately woven by God, implores believers to advocate for the most vulnerable members of society, embodying the principles of love, respect, and stewardship of human dignity as articulated in both Scripture and the theological discourse of Pentecostal thought.

Keywords: abortion, abortion ethics and morality, sanctity of life, holiness, Pentecostal.

13.00-13.15 – *Divinity Revealed in Marginality: Death as an Existential Limit in Light of the Declaration "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:17–44),* PhD Candidate Măcelar-Mutu Liviu Alin, Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: This article offers a theological and ethical reading of John 11:17–44, approaching death as a boundary of human existence. It examines how Christ's identity is revealed in the encounter with death and considers the implications of this revelation for Christian responses to suffering. Marginality is employed in an existential sense, distinguished from social marginalization, to describe the experience of finitude, loss, and the limits of human agency. Methodologically, the study combines exegetical analysis with theological and ethical reflection. It explores the relationship between Jesus' dialogue with Martha, his declaration "I am the resurrection and the life," his tears, and his calling Lazarus from the tomb. Particular attention is given to verse 35, interpreted within the narrative context of love, emotional disturbance, and responses of faith and doubt. The central argument is that the revelation of Christ's identity brings together his life-giving authority and his personal engagement with those who mourn. Death, understood as a limit of human agency, becomes the setting for an encounter with Christ in which the promise of life and the reality of grief are held together. The article develops implications for a Christian ethic of compassion and accompaniment, in which resurrection hope sustains a responsible presence alongside those who suffer.

Keywords: existential marginality; Johannine Christology; death; resurrection; compassion; Christian ethics.

13.15-13.30 - *Spiritual Revitalization in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy: The "Army of the Lord" between Reform and Spiritual Awakening,* PhD Candidate Luca Deneș, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: This article examines the "Army of the Lord" movement, initiated in 1923 by the priest Iosif Trifa, through the lenses of the sociology of religion and ecclesiastical history, assessing the extent to which it constituted a genuine "spiritual awakening" within the Romanian context. The study explores the interwar socio-religious context, the theological foundations of the movement, the dynamics of its relationship with the official hierarchy of the Romanian Orthodox Church (ROC), and its impact on religious identity. The findings reveal that the "Army of the Lord" represented a distinctive phenomenon, involving the integration of patterns characteristic of the European and transatlantic "Great Awakenings" into the dogmatic and liturgical framework of rural and urban Romanian Orthodoxy.
Keywords: "The Army of the Lord," spiritual awakening, Romanian context, religious movement.

13.30-13.45- *From the Word to Context: Eternal Light in the (Pen)umbra of Culture,* PhD Candidate Pop-Coman Ioan, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: Mapping the interaction between Christ and culture undertakes a bold analysis. Through a denominationally neutral approach, this endeavor seeks to clear a path through the interdisciplinary thicket, for the benefit of all those who desire a fruitful analysis of the tensions between faith and culture. Beyond offering a portrait of culture in light of the present-day relevance of God's sovereignty, this diligently informative and formative approach projects a broad and meaningful perspective onto the postmodern mind, regardless of the angle from which it is viewed. More specifically, several paradigmatic types of responses will be mapped out within the area of intersection between these two spheres: culture and the present-day relevance of God's sovereignty. The aim is neither to produce a comprehensive systematic treatise identifying a typology of the recurring ways in which Christians have understood the relationship between Christ and culture throughout history, nor to intensify the tension between the two, or, as the case may be, to eliminate it. Rather, the purpose is to demonstrate that this interaction has historically generated responses that can be structured into several major categories. The debate between Christ and culture, even in its surrogate form, through the association of civilization and Christianity, has become a prominent topic in our day, frequently appearing on the lips of both outspoken and, where appropriate, humble theologians, historians, dignitaries, Christians, and anti-Christians. Amid the rapid developments reshaping society, the collision between Christianity and civilization brings into sharp relief the Christ-shaped stance toward culture.

Keywords: Christology, Gospel, civilization, ethics, Church, world, society, modernity, paradox, culture, sacred, profane.

13.45-14.00 - *The Enslavement of the Roma in the Romanian Principalities during the Middle Ages,* PhD Candidate Dan Iordan, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: The abolition of Roma slavery in the Romanian territories was a gradual process that unfolded between 1843 and 1856. The indigenous abolitionist movement was influenced by progressive currents in Europe, but it also had an internal dimension, shaped by pressure from political and intellectual elites. The rulers of the time took the first steps toward emancipation, beginning with enslaved people owned by the state and the Church. However, the reform initially encountered resistance from the boyar class, which owned a substantial proportion of the enslaved population and directly benefited from their unpaid labor. The pivotal moment was the Revolution of 1848, which, although it did not immediately bring about complete emancipation, created a favorable political framework for the conditions necessary to abolish slavery entirely within less than a decade.

Keywords: *Romanian territories, slavery, reform, abolition, state, Church.*

14.00-14.15 - *The Millerite Movement: Genesis and Identity,* PhD Candidate Florin Matei, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: The Millerite movement developed against the background of the Second Great Awakening and of a society that was still in formation. The study examines how, within the cultural setting of the 1830s and 1840s, William Miller, drawing on the cultural, technological, and religious means of his time, conveyed his conviction that Christ would return around the year 1843. Fundamental to understanding the Millerite movement is the conviction that there is a close connection between the emergence of this movement and the cultural and social context of America, and that cultural and social factors played an important role in shaping Millerite beliefs, ultimately leading to the formation of a Millerite identity.

Keywords: cultural, identity, Millerism, social, William Miller.

14.15-14.30 - *COPILUL ÎN NOUL TESTAMENT: Repere teologice privind statutul, apartenența la Împărăția lui Dumnezeu și responsabilitatea morală,* PhD Candidate Dimachi Sebastian, ”Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: Prezentul articol analizează perspectivele asupra copilului în Noul Testament, urmărind trei dimensiuni principale: statutul copilului în familie și în comunitate, relația dintre copil și Împărăția lui Dumnezeu, respectiv problema vârstei responsabilității morale și spirituale. În contextul societăților antice, în care statutul social al copilului era adesea inferior celui al adultului, atitudinea lui Isus față de copii reprezintă o perspectivă semnificativă asupra demnității umane și a valorii persoanelor vulnerabile. Textele evanghelice în care Isus îi primește pe copii și îi prezintă drept exemplu pentru cei care doresc să intre în Împărăția lui Dumnezeu constituie punctul central al analizei. Articolul examinează, de asemenea, dificultatea stabilirii unei vârste precise la care copilul devine responsabil din punct de vedere moral și spiritual, evidențiind limitele concluziilor care pot fi formulate exclusiv pe baza textului biblic. În final, sunt discutate câteva interpretări teologice privind mântuirea copiilor și implicațiile acestora pentru responsabilitatea familiei și a comunității creștine.

Keywords: copil, Noul Testament, Împărăția lui Dumnezeu, responsabilitate morală, familie, mântuire, Isus Hristos.

14.30-14.45 - *Homosexuality from a Biblical Perspective,* PhD candidate Jani Kardos, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania

Abstract: This paper examines homosexuality from a biblical perspective through an analysis of the principal scriptural texts of the Old and New Testaments, highlighting the theological, anthropological, and pastoral implications of this subject. The study presents the biblical understanding of human sexuality within God's creative design and explores the relationship between human nature, sin, and moral conduct. It analyzes key biblical passages, the theological interpretations associated with them, and their impact on the Christian understanding of identity and human responsibility. Furthermore, the research addresses the individual, familial, social, and ecclesial implications of homosexuality, with particular attention given to the pastoral dimension. Within this framework, the paper outlines the fundamental principles of pastoral care and Christian counseling, emphasizing the role of biblical truth, compassion, spiritual restoration, and the integration of individuals into the community of believers. The study concludes that the biblical teaching on sexuality remains relevant to contemporary challenges related to identity, morality, and the life of faith, providing theological and pastoral guidelines for understanding and addressing this issue.

Keywords: homosexuality, biblical perspective, sexuality, biblical anthropology, Christian theology, pastoral counseling, family, identity, morality, spiritual restoration.

14.45-15.00 - *Christian Witness between the Power of the Holy Spirit and the Responsibility of the Church: Toward a Pneumatology of Mission,* PhD candidate Darius Cătană, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: This study seeks to examine the relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit and the missionary responsibility of the Church. The starting point is the divine empowerment through which the Holy Spirit equips believers to bear witness to the Christian faith. The research tries to highlight how pneumatology provides a foundation for the missionary vocation of the Christian community. There is a close connection between pneumatology and missiology, as the Holy Spirit provides the power and capacity necessary for bearing witness to the Christian faith. To this end, the study examines several biblical foundations for the relationship between the power of the Holy Spirit and the proclamation of the Gospel. Methodologically, it combines the analysis of relevant biblical texts concerning mission with theological reflection on the implications of pneumatology for ecclesiology and missiology. The research is based on the hypothesis that empowerment by the Holy Spirit and the missionary responsibility of the Church are two complementary dimensions. Consequently, this research aims to highlight the constitutive role of pneumatology in shaping an understanding of Christian mission.

Keywords: Holy Spirit, mission, ecclesiology, Christian witness

15.00 – 15.15 - *The Events from December 1989 – June 1990, in Romania. Theological perspective,* PhD Candidate Natanael Văduva, ”Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad, Romania.

Abstract: The events that took place in Romania between Decembre 1989 and June 1990 left a deep mark on Romanian society, one that still resonates strongly today 37 years after revolution. Drawing upon the teachings of the Apostle Paul regarding submission to authorities, I will examine the events of that period through a theological lens. I will challenge the legitimacy of the democratic authorities that emerged following the fall of communism, grounding this critique in Pauline writings as well as the words of King Solomon in Proverbs 17:15—which states that both the one who acquits the guilty and the one who condemns the innocent are an abomination to the Lord—a standard that the authorities of that time failed to uphold. I will trace the events that shaped the destiny of a nation and its generations, leaving an indelible imprint on the people for decades to come, as they sought to build a genuine democracy.

Keywords: revolution, communism, miners' revolt, civil society, democracy.

15.15 – FINAL REMARKS