

# INTELLIT. The Digitization of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature (GDRL)*

## Modes of Engagement between Literature and Information Technology

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### Culture and Information Society

**P**ART OF the general project for the preservation and capitalization of the Romanian literary patrimony using intelligent digital solutions for data mining and systematization, the digitization of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature (GDRL)* addresses the imperious need to integrate the Romanian culture and literature—and, at the same time, the humanistic research in the Romanian academic institutes—into the new paradigms and rhythms of the information society. At first glance, the mission is a very difficult one. Between human sciences and information technology there seems to be an essential incompatibility, an opposition rooted in the radical difference between what Pascal called *esprit géométrique* and *esprit de finesse*, and Wilhelm Dilthey *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*—“natural sciences” and “human sciences,” between rationality, abstract thinking, observation and experiment, on the one hand, and sensitivity, emotions and inner experience, on the other. In our globalized world, governed by science and technology, the scientific spirit seems to have irrevocably triumphed, and humanistic sciences (at least in their traditional meaning) are facing increasing difficulties in imposing their conceptual and explanatory paradigms.

However, if we adopt a larger perspective on what sociologists and anthropologists refer to as “informational society”—the form of social organization, as Manuel Castells says, in which “information generation, processing, and transmission have become the fundamental sources of productivity and power”<sup>1</sup>—, then things start to become more nuanced, and the oppositions and differences characteristic to the traditional vision lose their Manichaeian accents. In a world where information, together with its pro-

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duction and processing technology, organizes the whole realm of social life, the changes and transformations brought about by computerization will inevitably affect both the extremely dynamic areas of economics and politics, as well as those, more inertial and conservative, of social relations and cultural life. And, knowing that information is produced and transmitted through signs, images and symbols, it is not difficult to see that the gap between the processes associated with the information technology and the mechanisms through which culture is created and transmitted is not one that cannot be overcome. For, if we start from the pragmatic definition of culture as a series of practices whereby senses and significances are produced and circulated within a social group by means of representational systems, then it becomes apparent that the ability to process and transmit information, on the one hand, and that of building and disseminating a culture, on the other, are the two faces of the same general process. And the analogy can be taken even further, if we consider that, as Castells notes, the informational socio-economic mode of development is based on the “action of knowledge upon knowledge itself as the main source of productivity.”<sup>2</sup> In the informational society, writes Castells, “information processing is focused on improving the technology of information processing as a source of productivity, in a virtuous circle of interaction between the knowledge sources of technology and the application of technology to improve knowledge generation and information processing.”<sup>3</sup> In the same way, as it is well known, culture develops equally through original creation and through processing, interpreting, disseminating and capitalizing past cultural products. To put it in simpler terms, culture breeds culture, in a process where signs act upon signs in exactly the same manner as information processing acts upon information technology.

This paper explores the current state of research in the humanistic sciences in the era of Internet and computerization and the new possibilities brought about by the information technology in order to achieve the academic project entitled “Preservation and Capitalization of Romanian Literary Patrimony by Means of Intelligent Digital Solutions for Data Mining and Systematization” (INTELLIT).

## **Humanistic Sciences and Information Society: “Digital Humanities”**

**T**HE INFORMATION technology began to exert a significant influence on humanistic sciences in the last decade of the last century—in the era of accelerated expansion of the Internet and of growing general public access to the new medium of expression and communication. Specifically, at the moment of the first organized initiatives aimed at converting and digitally storing the fundamental texts and artistic products of the world cultural heritage. Transformed later on into databases and digital libraries and archives, these efforts led to the creation of such websites as “Project Gutenberg”—an access free archive that contains some of the greatest literary and philosophical works of mankind—or “The Princeton Dante Project”—the most complete database on the life and work of the famous Italian writer. In the same period of time

came out the first sites of libraries and cultural institutions, which offered online text collections and book archives in .txt, .doc, or .pdf formats; also, this is the moment of the first digital encyclopaedias, such as *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *Encyclopaedia Universalis*.

However, what initially seemed to be a simple consequence of the global spread of the Internet and information technology—a “side effect” limited to copying, systematizing and archiving operations—proved to be, in the long run, the first stage of development for a new field of research: “digital humanistic sciences” or “digital humanities.” For, beyond the somehow “mechanical” action of digitally reproducing printed texts and documents, it has become more and more obvious that the process of digitization, taken in a broader sense, opens the way to entirely new approaches and methods of interpreting the literary and cultural phenomena. At the same time, the literature written directly on the Internet—from the essays and illustrated poems of bloggers to collaborative online novels and hybrid genres like “life writing”—demanded analytical and critical appraisal tools adapted to the rules and social mechanisms of the digital space. Consequently, what appeared to be only a sequence of the process of aligning the humanistic sciences to the digital era has come to be called “digital humanities 1.0,” followed nowadays by “digital humanities 2.0.”

What do we mean by “digital humanities”? In simple terms, digital humanities is the field of activity and research that considers humanistic sciences through the possibilities of analysis, systematization and interpretation provided by the information technology. Or, in Patrik Svensson’s definition, digital humanities is “an inclusive notion that will allow us to talk about different kinds of initiatives and activities in the intersection between the humanities and information technology or the digital.”<sup>4</sup> The same idea appears in *Digital Humanities Quarterly*: “Digital humanities is a diverse and still emerging field that encompasses the practice of humanities research in and through information technology, and the exploration of how the humanities may evolve through their engagement with technology, media, and computational methods”<sup>5</sup>. In the avant-garde tradition, there is also a manifesto of digital humanities, written by Jeffrey Schnapp and Todd Presner and enlarged with relevant ideas from various researchers and contributors:

*Digital Humanities is not a unified field but an array of convergent practices that explore a universe in which: a) print is no longer the exclusive or the normative medium in which knowledge is produced and/or disseminated; instead, print finds itself absorbed into new, multimedia configurations; and b) digital tools, techniques, and media have altered the production and dissemination of knowledge in the arts, human and social sciences. The Digital Humanities seeks to play an inaugural role with respect to a world in which, no longer the sole producers, stewards, and disseminators of knowledge or culture, universities are called upon to shape natively digital models of scholarly discourse for the newly emergent public spheres of the present era (the www, the blogosphere, digital libraries, etc.), to model excellence and innovation in these domains, and to facilitate the formation of networks of knowledge production, exchange, and dissemination that are, at once, global and local.*<sup>6</sup>

The vast majority of scholars agree that there are two phases of digital humanities, named by Cathy N. Davidson, after the two phases of the Internet development, “digital humanities 1.0” and “digital humanities 2.0.”<sup>7</sup> The first phase of digital humanities, also known as “computing humanities,” is the phase of creating databases, collections, and digital libraries and archives. It is the stage of “digitizing the human record,”<sup>8</sup> materialized in actions aimed at preserving the cultural achievements of mankind and ensuring access to the archives for as many people as possible: “Historically, Web 1.0 demarcates the first generation of the World Wide Web, basically from 1991 to the dot-com bust of fall 2001. Functionally, Web 1.0 is best characterized under the general rubric of data: primarily Web sites and tools that allowed for massive amounts of archiving, data collection, data manipulation, and searching, sites and tools mostly created by experts or commercial interests for the benefit of users worldwide.”<sup>9</sup> As a consequence, what previously called for considerable storage and conservation space can now be stored on miniature electronic devices, reducing at a minimum the access and administration operations. At the same time, being one click away from huge amounts of data has paved the way for significant changes in the way of reading, writing, and doing scientific research.

The second phase of digital humanities, which is now in full swing, goes beyond the somehow limited approach that characterizes the process of making archives and databases—a process in which technology is used as a tool and the computer as a sort of typewriter—in favor of a much more creative approach, in which information technology is at the forefront of development of new methods of research and analysis of literary and cultural phenomena. As Cathy N. Davidson writes,

*The computational tools, the multilingual and transnational archives at the disposal of humanists, and the numbers of scholars and students globally who have access to any given digital textual database have, I believe, been factors in transforming the paradigms of humanistic scholarship and moving us toward Humanities 2.0. Hybridity, exchange, flow, and cultural transaction are all explored more responsibly and adventurously when the resources of many nations, in many languages, have been digitized, made interoperable, and offered for research by scholars around the world, each of whom brings a local store of knowledge and experience to the theoretical, interpretive enterprise. Data transform theory; theory, stated or assumed, transforms data into interpretation. . . . As more and more archives are opening themselves not just to unrestricted access by users, not just to questions and challenges posed by users, but to actual input and contribution by users (including the input of multiple interpretations and theories), we are moving to a new generation of digital humanities.*<sup>10</sup>

We are facing a paradigm shift that can be considered from two perspectives. In the first one, the digitization process opens the possibility of reviving, on a much larger scale, some already known methods of analysis and interpretation. Resuming, for instance, with the assistance of artificial intelligence, the formalist and structuralist enterprise: we have in mind the statistical analysis of the language and vocabulary of a writer, the ratio between neologisms and archaisms in a text, along with the identification and extraction of the most

common terms, epithets, or metaphors in a literary work. At the next level, the stylistic analysis, highlighting the differences and contrasts among various authors of the same period, but also the evolution of literary language from one historical period to another. In the same vein, the use of algorithmic analysis to define the characters of a narrative, their occurrences and their functions (in accordance with the morphological pattern of Vladimir Propp). In all these cases, the fundamental difference between computer-assisted research and classical analysis is the huge amount of data that can be processed and interpreted: what, with the limited forces of a single man or a group of researchers, could only be applied to one writer or a single literary work, may now be extended to innumerable writings and even to entire historical periods, often leading to unexpected results—and, implicitly, to different conclusions and interpretations.

In the second perspective, the analysis and research methods developed by the digital humanities situate themselves in a sharp contrast with the traditional approaches. As Patrik Svensson writes, “There is a difference between a tool that mainly allows you to search for linguistic constructions in a text database (showing results in a table or concordance list), and a tool that does that as well as provides an interface where you can visualize results, create interpretative models, collaborate with others and combine different medial representations (for instance sound-audio, text, a timeline and relevant metadata).”<sup>11</sup>

This is because information technology has given rise to new forms of organizing and systematizing information, new modes of communication, and, more importantly, to new ways of reading and writing a text. And, in order to explain the radical transformation that led to the development of the contemporary vision, we must start from the Internet as the technological foundation and underlying pattern of the digital world.

The Internet—the driving force of the information society—is essentially a network. A form of interconnection and information transmission that, while initially responding to the economic and military imperatives of the globalization process, had remodeled the entire social existence—modifying, on the one hand, cognitive and behavior patterns and creating new forms of social organization and interaction (social networks as Facebook, Twitter, Quora or LinkedIn), but also creating, on the other hand, sophisticated forms of social control, with CCTV cameras, facial recognition systems and continuously recording every individual action. That is why, argues Manuel Castells, the contemporary social structure is to be conceptualized as “network society, because it is made of networks in all the key dimensions of social organization and social practice.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, “while networks are an old form of organization in the human experience, digital networking technologies, characteristic to the Information Age, powered social organizational networks in ways that allowed their endless expansion and reconfiguration, overcoming the traditional limitations of networking forms of organization to manage complexity beyond a certain size of the network. Because the networks do not stop at the border of the nation-state, the network society constituted itself as a global system, ushering in the new form of globalization characteristic of our time.”<sup>13</sup>

What is most specific to “global architecture of the global networks,” Castells argues, is that it “connects places selectively, according to their relative value for the network”<sup>14</sup>—the points of convergence of the networks being their “nodes”:

*The key spatial feature of the network society is the networked connection between the local and the global. The global architecture of global networks connects places selectively, according to their relative value for the network. . . . The global functions of some areas of some cities are determined by their connection to the global networks of value making, financial transactions, managerial functions, or otherwise. And from these nodal landing places, through the operation of advanced services, expands the economic and infrastructural foundation of the metropolitan region. So the changing dynamics of networks, and of each specific network, explains the connection to certain places rather than the places explaining the evolution of the networks. The points of connection in this global architecture of networks are the points that attract wealth, power, culture, innovation, and people, innovative or not, to these places. For these places to become nodes of the global network they need to rely on a multidimensional infrastructure of connectivity: on air, land, and sea multimodal transportation; on telecommunication networks; on computer networks; on advanced information systems; on the whole infrastructure of ancillary services (from accounting and security to hotels and entertainment) required for the functioning of the node.<sup>15</sup>*

Interconnection and constant communication have become vital in our contemporary world; being part of a network (or, preferably, of as many as possible) is the essential condition for one to be known and, more importantly, to be recognized. Conversely, the failure to integrate into networks leads to social segregation and isolation.

On the other hand, the specific way the Internet operates has led to a significant semantic shift of the notion of social network itself. Whereas in the traditional sense a social network is defined by the stable positioning and strict hierarchical order of its elements, in a digital network—where the information circulates instantly—a point on the network is as close or as distant as any other. In other words, while a traditional network has an absolute and fixed center and a predictable configuration—in accordance with the classical, metaphysical order of the world—an information network lacks both a predefined hierarchical structure and an absolute convergence point. In the new type of network, weak links become strong and vice versa, bringing together very different people, but also very distant ideas and cultures; its logic is not that of territoriality any more, but that of endless expansion and deterritorialization. The informational networks produce what Manuel Castells calls “timeless time”—“the dominant temporality of our society,” which “occurs when the characteristics of a given context, namely, the informational paradigm of the network society, induce systemic perturbations in the sequential order of phenomena performed in that context.”<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, surfing the Internet means jumping from one link to another and from one information to another in a sequence that is neither uniform, nor predetermined, nor subject to the idea of finality. In a literary perspective, the classic narrative thread—which presupposes a well-defined point of origin, various intermediate situations and a single ending—is replaced by multiple entries and open endings. The Internet pages can be read starting from anywhere and in any sequence, questioning both the old imperatives and ways of approaching and systematizing literature—the status of the author, the unity and

finality of the composition, the phenomenology of reception—as well as the classic idea of narrative. (You could say that the Internet has produced—starting with very different premises—Mallarmé’s *Book* or Borges’ *Book of Sand*, if the new vision were not in total opposition to the idea of book itself.)

In this sense, the obvious effect of the Internet as a network is that of *decentralization*. The idea is underlined by Cathy N. Davidson in the article defining the second phase of digital humanities: “Humanities 2.0 is distinguished from monumental, first generation, data-based projects not just by its interactivity but also by an openness about participation grounded in a different set of theoretical premises, which decenter knowledge and authority.”<sup>17</sup> The decentering effect of the informational networks provides—writes Yochai Benkler—greater freedom for individual creative initiatives: “What characterizes the networked information economy is that decentralized individual action—specifically, new and important cooperative and coordinate action carried out through radically distributed, nonmarket mechanisms that do not depend on proprietary strategies—plays a much greater role than it did, or could have, in the industrial information economy.”<sup>18</sup> Technically speaking, Internet cooperation requires the segmentation and “modularization” of projects—the act of dividing them into autonomous parts which, being produced in accordance with the same general rules, can be assembled and re-assembled in multiple configurations:

*The information production process must effectively integrate widely dispersed contributions, from many individual human beings and machines. These contributions are diverse in their quality, quantity, and focus, in their timing and geographic location. The great success of the Internet generally, and peer-production processes in particular, has been the adoption of technical and organizational architectures that have allowed them to pool such diverse efforts effectively. The core characteristics underlying the success of these enterprises are their modularity and their capacity to integrate many fine-grained contributions. “Modularity” is a property of a project that describes the extent to which it can be broken down into smaller components, or modules, that can be independently produced before they are assembled into a whole. If modules are independent, individual contributors can choose what and when to contribute independently of each other. This maximizes their autonomy and flexibility to define the nature, extent, and timing of their participation in the project.*<sup>19</sup>

In a methodological perspective, the decentering process caused by Internet navigation and interaction requires reconsidering and even giving up the premises and interpretative grounds of classical humanistic sciences: this means not only accepting the various forms of “peripheral” culture and literature (comic books, television, hybrid literary genres, detective novels, science fiction etc.) as a legitimate object of study,<sup>20</sup> but the challenge of critically rethinking an entire conceptual and axiological architecture, beginning with the idea of literary canon. Thus, unlike the tree-like pattern of the classical critical approach—with a central (“canonical”) axis and a strict hierarchical and homogeneous order of its elements—, the network approach explores the information asym-

metrically and in multiple directions, producing cultural and conceptual “maps,” which can be assembled, cut and rearranged in very different ways.

One of the most interesting scientific initiatives in this line of research belongs to programmers David and Sandra Schloen from the University of Chicago; they plead for a radical change in the systematization methodology of literary and cultural information in the virtual space, transcending thus what they call the “document paradigm” in favor of the “database paradigm.” Within the document paradigm, which is at the basis of almost all current digital collections and archives, “the digital representation of information depends on the relative position of units of information in one or two dimensions. Information is represented by linear character strings or by tables consisting of rows and columns, as on a flat printed page.”<sup>21</sup> Mimicking the pre-digital pattern, the document paradigm organizes the information as a “hierarchical tree of textual components,” admitting only one type of reading at a time: “for example, a text might be broken down into pages, paragraphs, lines, and words, in a descending hierarchy, or it might be broken down into component parts in some other way, depending on the mode of analysis being employed. Regardless of how they are defined, a text’s components can be separated from one another within a long sequence of characters and related to one another in a hierarchical fashion by means of markup tags.”<sup>22</sup>

Unlike the document paradigm, the database paradigm goes beyond the linear nature of printed documents in favor of a multidimensional dynamic structure: thus, the new method uses “atomized units of information in a flexible manner”<sup>23</sup>—units which, extracted and recombined by the artificial intelligence, allow the intersection and overlapping of multiple hierarchies by simultaneously representing different ways of reading and interpreting a text. Instead of using a fixed mark-up system, the database paradigm uses a stand-off mark-up: “Stand-off mark-up involves the digital representation of multiple readings of a text by means of separate data objects, one for each reading, with a system of pointers that explicitly connect the various readings to the text’s components,”<sup>24</sup> in which “not just each entity of interest but each property of an entity and each value of a property is represented as a separately addressable data object.”<sup>25</sup> This results in the possibility of digitally representing a poem, for example, simultaneously as metrical, grammatical and semantic structure. In such a database,

*individual data objects may be linked together by end-users in different ways without imposing a single standardized terminology or classification scheme. By virtue of being highly atomized and readily reconfigurable, data objects that represent individual entities and properties and the relationships among them are able to represent the many idiosyncratic interpretations that characterize critical scholarship much better than traditional digital documents. . . .*

*For example, a database item may represent a unit of analysis on the epigraphic level, like a character or line; or it may represent a unit of analysis on the linguistic or discourse level, like a morpheme, word, clause, or sentence. It is up to the end-user to define the scope of the items that make up a text and how they are related to one another hierarchically and non-hierarchically.<sup>26</sup>*

The database paradigm conceived by David and Sandra Schloen, together with the Semantic Web created by Tim Berners-Lee,<sup>27</sup> opens the possibility of automated analysis and simultaneous representation of more than one reading of the same text; the primary goal is not reproducing the text as such, but the various ways of approaching and understanding it.

Turning back to the fundamental changes brought about by the Internet—the technological tool and “mirror” of the globalized world—probably the most important is the relativization and even elimination of all the traditional borders and boundaries. This refers to the geographical, social and cultural borders, but also to the traditionally established limits and boundaries between various knowledge and research fields. Practically, jumping from one link to another implicates moving around from text to text, but also going from text to image, from image to sound, and then to animated graphics and so on; on the other hand, going from literature to history, and hence from statistics, sociology, economics or politics. Therefore, the analysis of virtual space requires a transdisciplinary approach. Without it, the cultural image of the Internet would become confusing and even chaotic. In Jeremy Hunsinger’s terms, “the very nature of the Internet as an object of study is its incomprehensibility as a whole from disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives.”<sup>28</sup> The general concept used for the analysis and description of the Internet in a transdisciplinary perspective is “critical digital studies”—a domain defined in its essential problematics by Arthur and Marilouise Kroker:

*Critical digital studies do not begin with a pre-established agenda, but with a thematically focused series of key problematics. First, how can we expand the studying the digital future to include the full array of technological innovations, namely, the impact of technology on culture, society, economy, and politics? Second, how can we best interpret the fluid work of media archaeology, those innovative media convergences that drive together traditional media (print, television, radio) with their digital counterparts from the Internet and the Web? Third, how can critical digital studies break beyond the disciplinary boundaries of traditional media interpretation to actually cross boundaries—boundaries of knowledge, of societies, of species, of machine-human interfaces—in search of a form of media practice that is itself reflective of the porous boundaries of the digital reality that it seeks to explore? And, fourth, how can critical digital studies achieve the desired aim of bending the digital future in the direction of creative uncertainty, privileging that is, the intermediations, inflections, and paradoxes that are so deeply characteristic of the digital flow.*<sup>29</sup>

Finally, the third essential feature of the Internet—and, implicitly, of digital humanities—is *participation*: “Web 2.0 includes all forms of corporate or social networking (from Google to MySpace), collaborative knowledge building (sites such as Wikipedia), user-generated content (including photo-sharing sites like Flickr or video-posting sites like YouTube), and blogs, wikis, virtual environments, and other sites that use a many-to-many model of participation and customization.”<sup>30</sup> Virtual space allows users not only to go through ready-made cultural productions and interpretations, but to create their own personal databases, tables and link patterns. In addition, those who are really interested can participate by writing texts or adding opinions and arguments to a gen-

eral project (Wikipedia is a good example, but also the digital humanities 2.0 manifesto). The new culture of the Internet is characterized by Yochai Benkler as “transparent” and “participative”:

*The networked information economy makes it possible to reshape both the “who” and the “how” of cultural production relative to cultural production in the twentieth century. It adds to the centralized, market-oriented production system a new framework of radically decentralized individual and cooperative nonmarket production. It thereby affects the ability of individuals and groups to participate in the production of the cultural tools and frameworks of human understanding and discourse. It affects the way we, as individuals and members of social and political clusters, interact with culture, and through it with each other. It makes culture more transparent to its inhabitants. It makes the process of cultural production more participatory, in the sense that more of those who live within a culture can actively participate in its creation. We are seeing the possibility of an emergence of a new popular culture, produced on the folk-culture model and inhabited actively, rather than passively consumed by the masses. Through these twin characteristics—transparency and participation—the networked information economy also creates greater space for critical evaluation of cultural materials and tools. The practice of producing culture makes us all more sophisticated readers, viewers, and listeners, as well as more engaged makers.<sup>31</sup>*

Described briefly in its essential features, the Internet has changed and remodeled the contemporary world in all its dimensions—economic, political, social, and cultural.

## **Digital Humanities and the Digitization Project of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature***

**H**OW SHOULD be approached, according to the theoretical framework described above, the project of digitization of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature*? First of all, we have to say that the cultural websites and digital libraries and archives in Romania are underdeveloped. As a consequence, the digitization project of *GDRL* should cover, simultaneously, both phases of “digital humanities.” We have to consider at the same time both the laborious process of building digital archives and databases (the so-called first stage of digital humanities), as well as the task of finding and developing new methods of approaching and interpreting cultural and literary phenomena. Thus, in the first stage, the research will be geared towards identifying the best digitization and text converting solutions, so that the printed edition of the *GDRL*—the most important and comprehensive work of its kind in the Romanian literature and culture—be easily converted in all its substantial amount of information and encyclopaedic intent. At the same time, it is necessary to create a correlation table between the specific ways of digitally storing and organizing information and the traditional ways of ordering and systematizing literature (grouping writers and literary works into cultural

movements, classifying literary works into literary genres and species, etc.). For these purposes, the most advanced digital storage techniques will be applied in order to overcome the physical limitations of printed documents in favor of the new opportunities of organizing and archiving provided by the information technology (for instance, the object of a critical analysis may be a piece of text or a poetry volume, but also an entire archive of texts and images).

In the second phase, the research will focus on the possibilities offered by the information technology in order to open new methodological horizons in the field of literary history and theory. This can be done only by knowing and closely observing the organizing and operating rules of information networks: that is, *permanent connection*; *decentering*; *modularization*; *transdisciplinarity*; *participation and interaction*. One of the directions of the research, for example, could start from Patrik Svensson's idea of "information technology as an expressive medium"<sup>32</sup>. In this sense, more and more scholars agree that "fungibility"—"the gathering of many types of content (moving image, text, music, 3D-design, database, graphical detail virtual walk-through, etc.)"<sup>33</sup>—leads to significant changes in understanding and interpreting cultural realities.<sup>34</sup> (A good example is also the emergence and development, at the end of the last century, of the domain of "ekphrasis".) Also, a major challenge for the current research project is the evolution in the digital humanistic sciences from "document paradigm" to "database paradigm". Following the direction of research indicated by David and Sandra Schloen, the key to successfully implement new research methods is the close cooperation between humanistic scholars and digital science specialists for the purpose of aligning the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature* to the normative framework governing the Semantic Web. Last, but not least, we must consider and define the limits and boundaries of the participation of the general public to the research efforts, integrating the valid and interesting ideas into the general project. All these with the stated purpose of making the digital edition of *GDRL* a significant cultural presence in the virtual space—a true "node" of information and cultural networks.

A pioneering work in the Romanian humanistic research, the digitization project of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature* opens the possibility of initiating and developing new methods and perspectives of analyzing and interpreting the literary and cultural realities, past and present.



## Notes

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**Abstract**

INTELLIT. The Digitization of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature (GDRL)*:  
Modes of Engagement between Literature and Information Technology

This paper explores the current state of research in the humanistic sciences in the era of Internet and computerization, and the new possibilities brought about by information technology in order to achieve the academic project entitled “Preservation and Capitalization of Romanian Literary Patrimony by Means of Intelligent Digital Solutions for Data Mining and Systematization” (INTELLIT). According to the new theoretical and methodological perspectives opened up by digital humanities, the main rules that the digitization project of the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature* should closely observe are those governing the information networks: decentering; modularisation; permanent connection; transdisciplinarity; participation and interaction.

**Keywords**

digital humanities, Romanian literature, global networks, information technology, critical digital studies

