

Considerations of Art Collector Gheorghe Vintilă on Romanian Modern Painting

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Abstract: *Gheorghe D. Vintilă was an important collector from Romania, who contributed to the establishment of the only Romanian museum of modern art located in a rural area. Over the course of approximately 40 years, he collected 340 works of art, most of which are paintings, but also graphics and sculptures, which today are part of the national heritage, due to the fact that they are found in the collection of the Constanța Art Museum or in a its section, namely the "Dinu and Sevasta Vintilă" Museum in Topalu. In addition to the impressive collection of Romanian modern art, Gheorghe D. Vintilă also left to posterity a series of reflections on the artworks of some artists he knew during his lifetime as a result of his passion for visual artistic creation and this concerns oriented towards the understanding of artistic beauty.*

Keywords: *Gheorghe D. Vintilă; art collector; Romanian modern painting; artistic beauty; aesthetic appreciation;*

Introduction

At the Constanța Art Museum, we can find a series of personal files that belonged to the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă. He was born on May 10, 1898, in the Topalu commune of Constanța county, and from 1920, the year in which he started his professional activity being employed as a temporary extern at the Maternity Institute in Bucharest, he began to collect works of art and he collected a number of 340 works of painting, graphics and sculpture, which today are part of the national heritage thanks to his generosity. Being a great lover of art, the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă began to passionately collect works of art by contemporary national artists, and later to his passion was added the reflection on the value of a period in the evolution of Romanian art, more precisely on representative art for the centuries 19th and 20th.

In the files that belonged to the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă are found, typed or in holographic form, a series of records in which meetings in different contexts with contemporary artists are highlighted, visits that the collector made to the workshops of contemporary artists being interested of the purchase of some works of art, but also appreciations about some of the artists he met personally or about works of art made by them. In the pages of these files, we can find real portraits of artists, as well as detailed descriptions of some works of art that the Romanian collector purchased or admired.

In 1969, the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă retired. From that moment the collector focused all his attention on art, his spirit of research and passion for art intertwining. In 1969, Gheorghe D. Vintilă was appointed chief museographer at the Constanța Art Museum, as a result of the fact that most of the works of art that he acquired throughout his life and that made up his own art

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collection were donated to the administration local from Topalu, and another part was donated to the Constanța Art Museum or was purchased by the same cultural institution from Constanța.

After 1969, from the role of chief museographer at the Constanța Art Museum, Gh. D. Vintilă got involved in a committed manner in the good preservation and conservation of his own art collection, which became national heritage. The activity of the museographer of the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă was intertwined with his concern for the elaboration of studies on works of art from his own collection and beyond. This concern for the aesthetic appreciation of works of art can be found in the life of the doctor collector since the 40s of the 20th century, when he bought a work of art from an art collector, Lazăr Munteanu, having a series of discussions with him about art. From this moment Dr. Gh. D. Vintilă began to be more interested in art: he began to read art books, began to sporadically attend art exhibitions, contacted several artists and began to follow the chronicles of art, although, he confessed, the contradictory opinions of the chroniclers confused him². This period marks the collector's desire to understand art more deeply, to educate and cultivate his artistic taste, and the years following his retirement were devoted to this aspect.

1. Reflections of the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă about some paintings

Going through the typescripts or holographic writings from the personal files that belonged to the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă and that can be found in the archives of the Constanța Art Museum reveals a series of the collector's reflections on the works of art of some artists he knew and which he approached during his life, as a result of his passion for artistic creation and his spirit oriented towards the understanding of artistic beauty.

Among the notes in which meetings in different contexts with contemporary artists are highlighted and visits that the collector made to the workshops of contemporary artists being interested in purchasing works of art or appreciations about some of the artists he knew personally or about works of art made by them, there are also detailed descriptions of works of art, dealing with various themes, that the artist acquired or admired. Subjects such as the landscape, which also includes the seascape or the city landscape, was approached by Gheorghe D. Vintilă as a result of the meeting with the artistic creation of the painters Nicolae Dărăscu, Nicolae Tonitza or Theodor Pallady. From the encounter with the art of the last two mentioned painters, his reflections on nudes were also born, and the painter Theodor Pallady inspired him to reflect on static nature, genre scenes or self-portraits.

1.1. The landscape in Romanian modern art – reflections of the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă

One of the painters that the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă met and whose works of art he appreciated was Nicolae Dărăscu. Among the personal files that belonged to the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă and which can be found in the archives of the Constanța Art Museum, there is also the file titled *Dr. Vintilă – for the Topalu Museum*, in which there are two typed texts about "The landscape inspired by N. Dărăscu's Tulcea ", signed by Dr. Vintilă D. Gheorghe, Principal Museographer.

² Cristina Gelan. 2023. „Gheorghe D. Vintilă – the portrait of an art collector”. În *Education, Research, Creation*. Periodical of the Faculty of Arts of the University Ovidius from Constanța vol. 9, nr. 1 – 2023, p. 123.

From the notes of Gheorghe D. Vintilă we learn that he met the artist Nicolae Dărăscu in a train compartment, going to Suici. The painter was traveling to Curtea de Argeș, where he would stay for a month to paint landscapes. Following the conversation between the two, the doctor received an invitation to visit the artist's studio when he returns to Bucharest. A few months after the meeting in the train compartment, the two meet again by chance in Bucharest, and as a result of the meeting, Gheorghe D. Vintilă will visit the painter N. Dărăscu's studio.

This is how the doctor collector begins his description of the contact with the artist's workshop: "From the beginning I was struck by the valley of Argeș, which flowed softly, behind a hill, guarded by a few poplars whose leaves seemed to rustle in unison with the murmur of the water. [...] In landscapes you are more honest, you have a mosaic touch, made up of pure tones, which invites you to meditation and contemplation; then you have a special charm in rendering nature in all its frankness, full of sunshine, with incandescent lights and reverberations that make the leaves of the trees vibrate, the waves of the waters, and a calm and glowing atmosphere. [...] In his creative maturity, the pictorial manifestations were thought out, expressing a sensibility of his own with sincere, clear expressions linking them directly to everything, man and nature. [...] I had a special sympathy for Dărăscu and that is why he is well represented in the Topalu collection. He was born like me on the banks of the Danube, he was nostalgic for the peregrinations on the waters that he painted so truthfully. The water of the Danube whether in Tulcea or the Delta or in Argeș flowing quietly or tumultuously among the trees, with the reflected shadows or with the top of the frames/branches bent on the shine of the waves, which stir like a human tumult and through which the perisage wins by enlivening"³.

The collector also looks at some paintings by the painter N. Dărăscu, in which the painter proposes seascapes or genre scenes in the marine setting, about which he makes genuine and interesting assessments: "Here is *Jetty at the sea* or *Boats at Vîlcov* – a narrow bridge connects the land to the boundless water, a boat with swollen sails is tied to the deck, beckoning two hikers animated by adventure and yet hesitant in the face of the unknown. The sea is calm, enticing, the background dips between the sky and the water, the infinite horizon, unknown and yet attractive. The movement is suggestive, the painter captures a psychological moment in the struggle for life, for a happier life, the boat and the man – exploring lands and depths to pluck nature's scythes to feed him"⁴.

³ Gheorghe Vintilă. 1974–1975. „Peisajul inspirat de Tulcea lui N. Dărăscu”. *Dr. Vintilă – pentru Muzeul din Topalu. Dosar personal cu scrieri dactilografiate și olografe*, Constanța, tabs 80–78, pp. 2–4.

⁴ *Ibidem*, tabs 78–77, pp. 4–5.



Fig. 1. Nicolae Dărăscu, *Wharf*, undated, Oil on cardboard, 54 x 68cm, "Dinu and Sevasta Vintilă" Museum, Topalu



Fig. 2. Nicolae Dărăscu, *Landscape in Vîlcov*, 1929, Oil on canvas, 45 x 54,5cm Constanța Art Museum

The presence of man in Nicolae Dărăscu's landscape paintings is, according to Gheorghe D. Vintilă, an expression of the intrinsic connection between man and nature: "Always in the presence of man at work, which, contrary to Cézanne, he presents as a twinned phenomenon with nature, subject to the conditions in which he fulfills his mission, saying that in motion (*Boats on the water*) man is led by the universe as an expression of himself"⁵.

The description of N. Dărăscu's landscapes, made by Gheorghe D. Vintilă, also includes general observations about landscapes outside the territory of the country, which the latter believes are an expression of the fixation on nature that the painter managed to express through drawing and color as following the nostalgia for the Romanian landscapes that the artist carries in his soul: "Tireless researcher discovers through his peregrinations, the beauty of nature, which he expresses through drawing and especially color. Impressionism, neo-impressionism, follower of the conceptions and technique of Monet, Van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec, inspired by the geometrical problems of Cézanne – the man of the waters, eager to set the surrounding nature in motion, exalts the color through a mosaic chromaticity, sometimes up to fauvism and pointillism, offering us a vision of our own, creation preceded by meditation and followed by contemplation"⁶.

Gheorghe D. Vintilă also makes assessments regarding the chromatics that we find in N. Dărăscu's paintings: "More meaningful than Grigorescu and Luchian, his coloristic kaleidoscope is expressed through the four primary colors red, yellow, blue and sometimes, where required they are complemented by purple, gray, brown, white, which he mixes in a rhetoric specific to his sensibility; the range of colors follow one another on a portable in a higher register that unfolds in a scientific way in the chromatic problems, through a strong sensation and feeling characteristic of Dărăscu. He is a poet of landscapes, lyrical and pathetic especially when it comes to his native places where you can hear the murmur of the waters, the hum of the leaves and especially the local color, the rustle of the reeds, the specifics of the Delta and Tulcea where the raw green that metamorphoses through gradients predominates subtle, with the season.

⁵ *Ibidem*, tab 77, p. 5.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

Retinas by the precious quality of the chords, green, silver, by the vibrant transparency of the color transfigured by the diffused spark of light, so arranged on the palette that it is synthesized, even before the intervention of the retina"⁷. Then referring to works such as *Summer in the Delta*, *Cherhanaua*, *Canalul in Delta*, Gheorghe D. Vintilă appreciates: "Landscapes like *Summer in the Delta*, *Cherhanaua*, *Canalul in Delta* almost intuit an exotic, tropical vegetation, in which the very nuanced green color abounds, mixed with discreet yellow, the blue of the waters and the sky in a subtle decantation, full of brilliance and charm where everything smiles friendly, with irresistible calls. [...] Permanent interpreter of human values he brings praise to man and nature through the poetry of form and color"⁸.

The cityscape in N. Dărăscu's paintings was also a source of comments for the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă. In this sense, we find the following remarks in the comments of the art collector: "In the urban landscapes we find houses on the outskirts of Tulcea, The bazaar din Tulcea, (today demolished), the Port of Tulcea, the Street of Tulcea made by the three known colors, a combination of landscape that they separate the geometric buildings with streets full of animation, from the daily life of the city, in which people circulate and Dobrogen carts with the local specifics and among which the blue overalls of the workers and the highly decorative shalwars like the veils of the past or a top of a mosque, where the muezzin he does his evening prayer, everything here is like a document, a vestige of nostalgia..."⁹.

Gheorghe D. Vintilă also focused on the seascape present in the creation of the painter Nicolae Tonitza. One of the remarkable meetings we find described in the art collector's notebooks is the one with the painter Nicolae Tonitza, who appreciated not only the artist's creations, but also his personality and temperament. This is how he describes one of the seascapes that the collector would purchase from the exhibition of the Romanian painter: "I continue to walk through the exhibition, until I discover another seascape: an eye of the sea in the final plane, bordered by a specific hill with a loamy, Dobrogean, dry, yellow, poor, on which two gnarled trees, with twisted, tormented crowns and trunks bent to one side, were trying to maintain themselves in the beating of the winds and the noise of the waves, ready to roll into the sea. [...] That's Tonitza. I have always valued it for its line, for its design and color, for its warmth and temperament"¹⁰.

Among the notes of the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă regarding the landscape are also appreciations regarding the landscape paintings of Theodor Pallady. The collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă saw Theodor Pallady for the first time in Paris, but not finding anyone to introduce him to the painter, he gave up approaching the Romanian artist, who was said to be "almost equal to Matisse in creation"¹¹. The School of Belle Arte in Paris was the place where Pallady trained as a painter¹², and the artist spent his life between Paris, where he took advantage of the cultural atmosphere, and Bucharest, where he often returned, participating in collective exhibitions, as a member of artistic associations Romanian or organizing their own personal exhibitions¹³.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Gheorghe Vintilă. 1974–1975. „Peisajul inspirat de Tulcea lui N. Dărăscu”. *Dr. Vintilă – pentru Muzeul din Topalu. Dosar personal cu scrieri dactilografiate și olografe*, Constanța, tab 77, p. 5.

¹⁰ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. f.a. „Cum l-am cunoscut pe Tonitza”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, tab 35.

¹¹ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. 1967. „Pallady”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, Pucioasa, 10 mai 1967, tab 37, p. 2.

¹² Ștefan Dițescu. 1971. *Omagiu lui Theodor Pallady. Expoziție comemorativă organizată cu prilejul împlinirii a 100 de ani de la nașterea artistului. Decembrie 1971 – februarie 1972*. București: Întreprinderea Poligrafică „Arta grafică”, p. 49.

¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 49–52.

Between the landscapes of Th. Pallady, Paris with the quays of the Seine occupies a special place, and among the records of the doctor Gheorghe D. Vintilă this aspect is not long in appearing: "Whoever has been to Paris has seen the man bathed in silvery gray – he easily understands why the Seine is painted by Pallady, enveloped in a transparent semolina mist – rising from the water, and enveloping in shadow, people and houses. So the atmosphere specific to Paris, with the diffuse brightness of the sky, charged with water vapor, renders them in a color harmony as only Pallady was able to distribute and warm a cold color like gray. Here and there, the landscape is dotted with a few colors, with the green reflection of the water, the brown of the boats, the gray silhouettes on the geometrically drawn shore, thus reducing the subject matter of the painting to the bare essentials. And yet in the background you can see the Pantheon with the bones of the illustrated figures, who gave France a great and grandiose history, wanting to honor this hospitable country full of suggestions for the artistic treasure of the world"¹⁴.



Fig. 3. Theodor Pallady, *Sena*, undated (1923-35), Oil on cardboard, 59,2 x 48 cm, Constanța Art Museum



Fig. 4. Theodor Pallady, *The Pantheon in Paris*, undated, Oil on cardboard, 63 x 48,5 cm Constanța Art Museum

Another landscape, from the south of France, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, from the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, more precisely from Saint Tropez, which was acquired by the collector is described by him as follows: "A lake, a hill and a house in the foreground specific to the Mediterranean locality that feels, beyond, over the tops of the hills: behind them – rises the sea and the salty air, all exposed in plans, on tiered levels, with a decorative effect. The reduced dimensions of the hills, the lonely house, the geometrically arranged trees, short, but full of vitality, create an intimacy in which the smile of nature can be distinguished, of the view

¹⁴ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. 1967. „Pallady”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, Pucioasa, 10 mai 1967, tab 39, p. 4.

rendered by colors of a special sensitivity. A moment of silence, the dreamy lines by the lake were transposed into Lamartine's contemplation – in stillness, melancholy, solitude, composition of a new monumental vision, which is rendered by muted colors – in shades of archaic painting and in foreign landscapes, like the from above, one feels the nostalgia of the Moldavian villages, which he represented so truthfully"¹⁵.

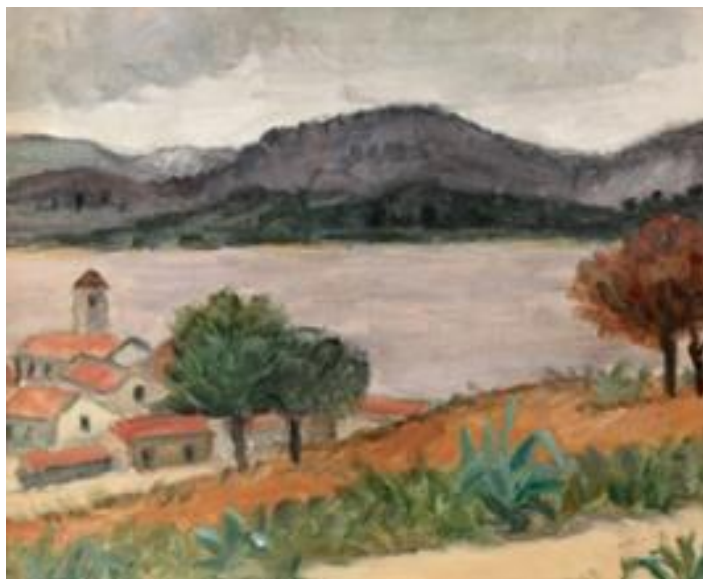


Fig. 5. Theodor Pallady, *Saint Tropez landscape*, undated, Oil on canvas pasted on cardboard, 37,8 x 45,9cm "Dinu and Sevasta Vintilă" Museum, Topalu

The reference to the nostalgia of Moldovan landscapes, which represented the first contact of the artist Th. Pallady with nature, is considered by Gheorghe D. Vintilă to be revealing also when the artist painted landscapes in the south of France, at Saint Tropez: "It seems that the landscapes made in the south of France at "Saint Tropez" also brought into their creation, the nostalgia of the Moldavian hills – from the land and art of his country, each of them also externalized in the landscapes made in Bucium or the surroundings of Iași. He did not allow himself to be attracted by the artistic experience of impressionism, or of the original post-impressionists or Cézanne, except in the master of rendering the atmosphere, the space through bright, clean, bright colors"¹⁶.

Even in the sketches made by Th. Pallady, the Romanian collector sees the genius of the artist's expressiveness: "A sketch, which can be found at Topalu, stands out for its drama, it is *A house after an earthquake* in pencil on a white background – are seen the cracked walls and the house so crumpled that looking at it you get the impression that it keeps shaking and is ready to collapse"¹⁷.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, tabs 39–40, pp. 4–5.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, tab 41, p. 6.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

1.2. The nude in Romanian modern art – reflections of the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă

Among the works of art collected by Gheorghe D. Vintilă throughout his entire career as a collector are also compositions with nudes. Some of these are described by the collecting doctor in a way that shows his attention to the subject rendered by the artist, the anatomical dimension that a doctor's eye cannot fail to notice, but also aspects related to the artistic technique or even the aesthetic complexity of a hermeneutic temptation that represents a common exercise in the appreciations of the collector and the art lover.

Regarding to a nude painted by Nicolae Tonitza, which the collector doctor purchased for his collection, we find the following among the notes made by him: "One day, while we were having coffee at Capșa, in the company of Prof. N. Ciorănescu, the Rector of the Polytechnic, with Mrs. His wife, with the writer Vladimir Străinu and Șerban Cioculescu, it comes to my painting collection [...] further on was Zambaccian, on which occasion he congratulated me on the purchase of a nude of a little girl, Tonitza's little girl, of a carnation, tenderness, and youthful exuberance, spreading perfume and emotion. The painting can be found today in the Constanța Fine Art Museum"¹⁸.



Fig. 6. Nicolae Tonitza, *Nude – Back*, undated (1927–1928), Oil on cardboard, 37 x 47,5 cm, Constanța Art Museum

The collector made extensive comments about the nudes made by the painter Theodor Pallady. In the pages of his notes, there are reflections on both the anatomical dimension and aspects that involve the analysis of the elements of plastic language and the means of plastic expression. His training as a doctor leads him to reflect on anatomy; this is what he wrote in the pages of some notes dated May 10, 1967: "As an anatomist, I was struck before all the nudes [...] – especially – those that represented the harmonious line of the human body – because Pallady right there, where nature was perfect – a deform, according to Matisse's suggestion – "deformer c-est embellier un peu", however, I did not taste this manner – to understand him, that is, to make

¹⁸ Gheorghe Vintilă. 1974–1975. „Oscar Han”. *Dr. Vintilă – pentru Muzeul din Topalu. Dosar personal cu scrieri dactilografiate și olografe*, Constanța, tab 161, p. 1.

something ugly – no matter how evolved they are, I remained at the stage fine arts"¹⁹.

Referring to the painting *Nude on chaise-longue*, which the art collector acquired for his collection, he will carry out a complex analysis of the painting, by analyzing the elements of plastic language and the means of plastic expression: "In Constanța finds a nude on a chaise-longue, arms over head, one thigh over the other, eyes closed dreamily, in a room, where the sun is iridescent through the window, a gust of wind rustling a tulle curtain and through which feels the atmosphere of intimacy; it is a moment of silence and meditation, in a moment of rest, relaxation, dreaming. The nude lying on the couch, lascivious without being sensual, sits in perfect harmony and symmetry, almost architecturally constructed; the posture of the body, arms, trunk, thighs, keep a perfect parallelism, with the arms – they lean against the deckchair, indicating at the same time the main directions of the volumes – they express, then, the light tonality of the skin. The whole room mutely vibrates with colored, transparent shadows, in which gray predominates [...] highlighting the silhouette of the woman"²⁰.

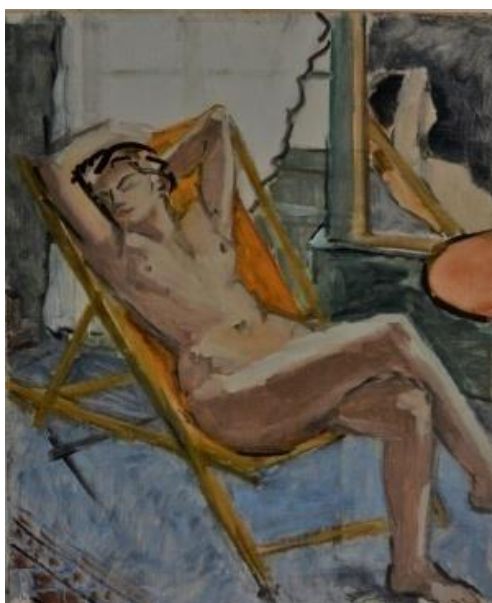


Fig. 7. Theodor Pallady, *Nude on a Deck-Chair*, undated
Oil on canvas stuck on cardboard, 61 x 50 cm, Constanța Art Museum

1.3. Still life in Romanian modern art – reflections of the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă

The still life was also an opportunity for reflection for the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă. Among the appreciations that the collector dedicates to the art of the painter Theodor Pallady, we also find reflections on the paintings in which Th. Pallady approached static nature, a genre in which "Pallady's constructive spirit found full realization, in the clear formulation of generally valid relationships, of natural logic that expresses the essence of an inner order"²¹. Because,

¹⁹ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. 1967. „Pallady”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, Pucioasa, 10 mai 1967, tab 38, p. 3.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, tab 38, p. 3.

²¹ Ionel Jianu. 1944. „Pallady”. *Pallady*. București: Editura Căminul Artei. In Marin Mihalache, *Pallady – mărturii*. Cluj: Editura Dacia, p. 171.

referring to this genre, the painter Th. Pallady confessed: "Often it takes me a few days to compose a picture like this, which I then paint in a few hours"²².

Referring to the still life painted by Theodor Pallady, Gheorghe D. Vintilă appreciated: "If in the other creations, – nudes, landscapes, Sena proved to be a great master of the brush, because with limited means, he renders perfection, through a specific, discreet and emotional tonality – in the still life that surpasses that the objects painted and gathered on a table – if they are personal, they evoke a state of mind for contemplation and meditation in front of reality, and the flowers, the fruits, create that atmosphere and ambience of youthful optimism within everyday life, recalling the close connection between man and nature. All still life objects are rendered in specific shapes and colors, some of which, such as Buddha, sea shells, a French novel, evoke distant lands full of the artist's nostalgia, which he visited when he retained their image. They play the main role in it, the harmony of the painting, the polyphony, placing the colors in closely related shades – without shrillness, in an equal light, each object bringing its special charm to other paintings, creates a strong feeling of dynamism, through the lively rhythm of the lines, the contrast between the values of dark and light colors – without feeling the movement; banal, everyday objects are elevated through the lyricism of coloring, to the level of poems, which excite and fulfill the soul life of the painter"²³.

1.4. The self-portrait in modern Romanian art – reflections of the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă

The considerations on the works of art made by the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă also concerned the self-portrait. Between the pages of his notes, we find reflections on a self-portrait of Th. Pallady: "most often with a brush in hand, like his contemporary Luchian, in the painting – he appears to us dignified, severe, somewhat tense, lucid, materialized to the maximum, with a sparkling look, with the expression of concentration, he only reveals his with the hand that masterful connection – that joins the brush to the eye, the brain there, where the edges are repelled as in an enchanted mirror, yet externalized by a calmness, rendered with distinction and lucidity. Often the painting made with a minimum of material, traced with the pencil over which he returns with the brush creates an ensemble of the composition – perfectly balanced – is also imposed by an outfit in which the tonality of the colors are laid down almost fluidly and in contrast with the energetic expression of the figure"²⁴.

The description made by Gheorghe D. Vintilă stands out for certain aspects that we find emphasized in other writings of the time. Essayist, critic and art historian Ionel Jianu notes about Pallady's self-portraits: "The look is sometimes severe and penetrating, sometimes sad, lost in who knows what dreams. Figure of ascetic. Figure of a man who lives on the heights of absolute and solitude. An uncompromising figure, severe, but full of imposing nobility"²⁵. Also, in an article published in the magazine *Contemporanul*, on August 12, 1966, the painter Corneliu Baba, referring to the self-portraits painted by Th. Pallady, wrote: "there was not a single self-portrait in which you did not discover his character traits both visible and invisible. However, this resemblance came naturally, it was reconstituted as a spiritual double from rough lines and in addition from the elimination of all the uselessness related to a certain appearance with infinite

²² Apud. Ionel Jianu, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

²³ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. 1967. „Pallady”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, Pucioasa, 10 mai 1967, tab 40, p. 5.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, tab 41, p. 6.

²⁵ Ionel Jianu, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

changes of the reality that is called the human face. [...] this appears as a synthesis of an inner life that is neither to be ignored nor to be concealed [...]. Over a severe drawing, the brush laid the color untainted by mixtures"²⁶.

1.5. Genre Painting in modern Romanian art – reflections of the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă

Among the paintings collected by Gheorghe D. Vintilă, which today can be found either at the Constanța Art Museum or at the "Dinu si Sevasta Vintilă" Museum in Topalu, there are also a series of portraits made by the painter Theodor Pallady after the model, which represent real genre painting. Between the pages dedicated to the painter Th. Pallady, the collector Gheorghe D. Vintilă referred also at the description of such a composition: "The woman sits in thought in front of the table with apples 'Femme aux pommes'. Someone put apples on the table for them to serve. The woman is completely absent, she sits in front of the table, thinking, she doesn't even see the fruit! The biblical temptation is rejected because her thought is absorbed by a care that overcomes her; she is tense, with his chin supported by a hand, in a soulful concentration and meditation, giving the impression of a tormented soul, of questions without resolution – the woman is here, for to give the interior privacy to the room, which is made up of a perfect balance of volumes, colors, gracefully harmonized and which, however, had not managed to wake the woman from her meditation; are in fact two distinct states – the dark, tormented soul of the concentrated person and the quiet, calm, joyful atmosphere of the surrounding reality, two contrasts that finally merge – what Pallady managed to express through thought and feeling, a perfect dialogue from the surrounding nature and now I understand why some exaggerations of his drawing were necessary for expression, without going beyond the limits of nature"²⁷.

Regarding the painting *Woman with Apple*, we find a detailed description that emphasizes the subject of the painting, the symbols present in the painting, the arrangement of the elements in the composition, as well as the way of using the means of plastic expression, all of which are expressions of the aesthetic sense that Gheorghe D Vintilă cultivated it over the years.

²⁶ Corneliu Baba. 1966. „Autoportretul lui Th. Pallady”. In Marin Mihalache, *Pallady – mărturii*. 1971. Cluj: Editura Dacia, pp. 243–244.

²⁷ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. 1967. „Pallady”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, Pucioasa, 10 mai 1967, tabs 38–39, pp. 3–4.



Fig. 8. Theodor Pallady, *Woman with Apple*, undated (1935),
Oil on cardboard, 65 x 50cm, Constanța Art Museum

The considerations that the Romanian collector made on some paintings that today are part of the modern Romanian artistic heritage, regardless of the artistic genre – whether it is about landscapes, nudes, still lifes, genre paintings or self-portrait, reveal to us a passion of his for the aesthetic understanding of the world of contemporary artists and an appetite for questioning some hermeneutic strategies from which its complex cultural universe shines.

Conclusions

The activity of Gheorghe D. Vintilă as a collector was intertwined with that of reflection on the paintings that he acquired for his own collection or that he sometimes just admired in the workshops of contemporary artists or in the exhibitions he visited. A doctor, passionate about collecting works of art, especially painting, he justified this noble occupation by the similarity he found between doctors and painters in terms of their interest in matter and spirit²⁸. The analysis and interpretation of some works of art made by him prove a major and constant interest between the collector's concerns regarding the understanding of the contemporary artistic phenomenon and a refined aesthetic taste.

Gheorghe D. Vintilă left posterity a series of appreciations of contemporary artists who today are among the most remarkable names of Romanian modern art. The collector doctor's problematization of art highlights a complex spirit, with a broad vision of the artistic phenomenon and the evolution of art.

²⁸ Gheorghe D. Vintilă. „De ce medicii sunt colecționari (în special de artă plastică)”. *Marea satisfacție. Portrete de artiști. Reflexii – Caiet de însemnări*, cap. III, fila 98: „... medicii sunt înclinați mai mult spre arta plastică – pictura – deoarece, temperamental ei se pot compara cu pictorii care, ca și medicii au de prelucrat 2 elemente – materia și spiritul”.

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