

## ABSTRACT

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### ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AND THEIR CONNECTIONS TO ROMANIAN CULTURE. STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN ARABIC PHILOLOGY

My habilitation thesis covers my training and professional career from the time of my University studies to the present day. It is divided into several chapters that follow the chronology of my life span, as presented in the opening *Contents*.

In the first Chapter I refer to my *Education as a philologist, a teacher and a researcher*. In the first sub-section I report on the study period at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Section of Arabic and English (1980-1984), and first jobs (1984-1993), before entering the Ph. D. program. This part reflects the choices that I made from the very beginning in terms of topics to follow up during the rest of my professional life: Arabic literature, Arabic language, Christian Arab studies, cultural relations between the Romanians and the Arab Christians in the mediaeval centuries and early modernity. The second sub-section is an account of the Ph. D. program, its content and its outcome, i.e. the Ph. D. degree that I was granted in 1998 and the publication of my thesis in Romanian (*Exprimarea gradatției în limba arabă. Studiu comparativ*, Publishing House of the Romanian Academy, 2003), which I am now preparing for an English version (*The Expression of Grading in Arabic*) to be published abroad. The final part of Chapter I contains proof of the visibility of my first book, at home and abroad, details on the continuation of the early research of certain topics comprised therein, and the perspectives that this work opened for my subsequent activity.

I dedicate Chapter II to the post-doctoral programs that I have attended: in 2003, a grant attributed through competition by the Andrew Mellon Foundation (supported by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers – CAORC) which allowed me to work in 2004 for 3 months at The Warburg Institute in London; a Paleography and Codicology course given by Prof. Adam Gacek, former Head of the Islamic Studies Library and Lecturer in Arabic manuscript studies at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University (Montreal), at the University of Manchester and the John Rylands Library in 2014, supported by the Islamic Manuscript Association din Cambridge (*Exploring Arabic Manuscripts: Scholars, Scribes, and Readers*), and two consecutive courses in 2009 and 2010, at the Romanian Academy,

dedicated to the “Assessment of research Institutes, projects, and researchers” („Évaluation des Instituts de recherche, des projets et des chercheurs”), and given by specialists from the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium), invited by the International Francophone Organization and the Wallonia – Brussels Delegation in Bucharest.

Chapter III covers my teaching period, as a titular member, at the Chair of Arabic of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Bucharest, in 1995-2004, and afterwards as an associate professor in two Master’s Programs at the same University (2010-2014). I presented in the first section my decade of teaching Arabic language, literature, and civilization, my support of training in Christian Arab studies, and the means of encouraging students to devote their time and efforts to studying the literary and cultural ties between Romanians and Arab Christians of present-day Syria and Lebanon in the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. I continued with a report on the courses that I created for the Master’s Program of the Department of International Relations and European Studies of the Faculty of History – University of Bucharest, i.e., “The Arab and Islamic Civilizations” (2010-2011), and the second one, “Christians Communities of the East”, for the Department of Oriental Languages of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures (2011-2014). The report comprises the major themes that I addressed during this course and the abilities that it aimed to transfer to the students.

I describe in Chapter IV my activities after I joined the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. Starting in 2005, I am dedicated to studying Arabic literature that connects the Romanians with the Syrian Patriarchate of Antioch, and to a second project that I am coordinating here: the publication of the New Series of *Romanian Cultural Traces Abroad. Romanian Creations and Sources about the Romanians in Foreign Collections*, a project initiated by Virgil Căndea, my father, who left unpublished a good part of the notes that he had gathered during his entire life.

Chapter V, *Scientific and academic achievements*, contains a presentation of all the major research themes that I followed up so far and their published results.

I have published from 1984 to 2016, in volumes with ISBN and periodical publications with ISSN (first under the name Ioana Căndea, then Ioana Căndea-Marinescu, and after 1991 Ioana Feodorov):

- 7 books as sole author,
- 4 books that I translated from various languages, one – in 2 editions,
- 6 volumes that I edited,

- 6 volumes that I co-edited,
- 56 studies and articles in scientific periodicals with ISSN and collective works, in Romania and abroad,
- 4 contributions to scholarly tools, sources, and bibliographies,
- 6 introductions, prefaces, and epilogues,
- 13 book reviews,
- 12 articles (circa) in reviews addressed to the larger public.

One of the books that I authored and two books to which I contributed a chapter are indexed by ISI Web of Knowledge (see the List of my works).

This being the most consistent chapter of my entire thesis, I have divided it into sub-chapters, each dedicated to one research topic, as follows:

1. Research of Arab Christians works concerning the Romanians – considered as philological and historical sources. The literary themes and style aspects form a large part of the research outcome. I included here comments on my study of the Middle Arabic variety spoken and written by Christian Arabs and the corpus of 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century Arabic works, preserved in manuscripts, that I have been studying: the *Journal* of Paul of Aleppo's travels in Syria, Constantinople, Moldavia, Wallachia, Ukraine, and Russia (1652-1659), the miscellany *Pleasant Collection* of Makarius III Ibn al-Za'īm, written around 1660 (*Majmu' latif*, comprising chapters on *The Life of Saint Paraskevi the New* and *The Chronicle of the Wallachian Princes, 1292-1664*), the works of Athanasius Dabbās (the Arabic translation of Dimitrie Cantemir's *Divan* a.o.) and Sylvester of Antioch (introductory texts to the Arabic books that he printed in Iași in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> c.). I completed this section with a case-study pertaining to the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Emil Murakade, a Syrian Christian resident in Bucharest who worked alongside Dan Simonescu in the description of Arabic books published in Snagov, Bucharest, and Iași. Murakade learned Romanian so well that he translated literary texts from Romanian to Arabic and vice-versa, and towards the end of his sojourn he published literary pieces composed by him in Romanian.
2. Editing of Arabic manuscripts. I discussed here the definition, for the first time in Romania, of an appropriate methodology for Arabic manuscript editing, based on the state-of-the-art conclusions of foreign experts (both West European and Middle

Eastern), and then the editions that I have prepared and published, including the Arabic version of Dimitrie Cantemir's *Divan* prepared by Athanasius Dabbās in 1705, the *Travel Journal* written by Paul of Aleppo, and the *Pleasant Collection* of Makarius III Ibn al-Za'im.

3. Translations from Arabic. This sub-section comprises the descriptions of my translations from Arabic medieval texts into foreign languages – French, English – followed by my translations of Arabic manuscripts into Romanian. I mostly refer here to the works of Paul of Aleppo, Makarius III Ibn al-Za'im, and Athanasius Dabbās.
4. Printing for the Arab Christians with Romanian help. I discussed here my research of the books that Antim Ivireanul ("The Iberian") printed in Arabic script, in the Arabic language, for the Christians of the Antiochian Patriarchate (seat in Damascus) in 1701-1702, and the destiny of the printing material that he gave to Athanasius Dabbās, Metropolitan of Aleppo and Patriarch of Antioch, who founded the first Arabic printing workshop in the Middle East, in Aleppo, in 1705. I went on to present the book that I devoted to these topics, *Printing for the Arab Christians. Antim Ivireanul, Athanasios Dabbās and Silvester of Antioch*, Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei „Carol I”, Brăila, 2016, 378 p. (and 43 p. of illustrations). The book follows this important joint venture between certain Wallachian and Moldavian princes and hierarchs and some Syrian patriarchs and higher clergy, until the establishment of the first Arabic printing-press for the Orthodox Christians in Lebanon, in 1750, probably with printing implements created at the Monastery of Saint Spiridon in Bucharest, a discovery that I was able to document during my research.
5. Translations of scientific works concerning the Arab countries, including Henri Lammens, *Croyances et institutions (Beliefs and Institutions)*, Bucharest, Editura Corint, 2003.
6. Translations of Arabic literary texts from the works of modern authors of prose, plays, and poetry, and essays referring to the Arab civilization.
7. Survey (record and descriptions) of the Romanian cultural items preserved in foreign collections, including a number of Arab and Middle Eastern countries: Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia. This encyclopedia includes traces of the life and works of Romania literary personalities such as Mihai Eminescu, Panait Istrati, Eugen Ionescu, Emil Cioran, etc.

8. This is a section devoted to the academic reunions that I contributed to, abroad and in Romania, aiming to increase my peers' awareness of my research and its outcomes. My preferred topics of research have led me to the participation in many conferences and colloquia, especially abroad (Budapest, Paris, London, Oxford, Durham, Birmingham, Amsterdam, Tbilisi, Kiev, Sankt-Petersburg, Rome, Valetta – Malta, etc.), but also at home (Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Galați, Sibiu, Hurezi Monastery, etc.).
9. This sub-section contains presentations of my books and other printed works, starting with those that I authored on my own, then the edited and co-edited volumes, chapters and studies in collective works, in periodical publications, book reviews, etc. I arranged the titles by subject, following the previously defined list of major themes that I have followed in my professional career so far. I am presenting briefly the contents of each printed work that I did not discuss in previous chapters. The *Contents* of my main books are given in the *Appendices*.
10. A sub-section devoted to the international cooperation that I have set up, based on joint research programs, with the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint-Petersburg and the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Ukrainian National Academy in Kiev. I am conducting these two Cooperation Agreements, which were signed initially for 3 years and were extended subsequently, at the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy. They both refer to the translation, Arabic edition and comments of Paul of Aleppo's *Travel Journal* and the contemporary cultural background.
11. This sub-section contains a list of the colloquia and symposia that I organized in Romania (Bucharest, Sinaia, Mamaia) and abroad (Kiev), closely following the record of my preferred research themes.
12. The final sub-section is dedicated to my endeavors in promoting a wider and deeper knowledge of Arab culture, and especially the Arab Christian civilization, in Romanian scholarly circles and with the larger public, aiming to increase the interest of the young people, the students of tomorrow, in studying the Arabic language and literature. My work includes articles in widely-distributed reviews, interviews on television and the radio, book launches, etc.

Chapter VI refers to the *Academic acknowledgement* that my works have received so far, starting with the *Mihail Kogălniceanu* Prize of the Romanian Academy for manuscript editions, granted to me on 18 December 2008, for my book *Dimitrie Cantemir, The Salvation*

*of the Wise Man and the Ruin of the Sinful World* (Editura Academiei Române, 2006), and the Honorary Diploma *Saint Antim the Iberian* awarded by H.H. Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, for my contribution to the volume *Artă și cultură eclezială. Sfântul Ierarh Antim Ivireanul*, Editura Cuvântul Vieții a Mitropoliei Munteniei și Dobrogei, Bucharest, 2016. I continued by mentioning the membership in the Writers' Union of Romania (Translation Branch of Bucharest), memberships in various Romanian and foreign professional associations (11), in editorial committees, reviews published about my works, citations and mentions in printed works and online, digital media awareness, etc.

I present in Chapter VII the research projects that I am involved in and the academic path that I am following, which cover, in few words: the editing and translation of medieval Arab texts – travel literature, philosophical and historical works – that connect the Romanian culture, and that of East-European countries in general, with the Arab Christian civilization; a study of the Middle Arabic variety spoken and written by the Arab Christians of Eastern Mediterranean lands, based on such texts; a catalogue of the Oriental manuscripts preserved in Romanian collections; the completion, in 2018, of the 8-volumes comprised in the new series of *Romanian Cultural Traces Abroad*.

I complete my report with a *Closing section* (Chapter VIII) where I sum up my aims and perspectives as an editor, translator, commentator, and researcher in the field of Arabic studies, especially studies of the Arab Christian civilization.

At the end of the examination of my teaching and research activities after I graduated the University (in 1984), I think that several directions and perspectives of interest are clear, which I have followed constantly, in an effort to develop a consistent career.

First, I am interested and will continue to work on the edition, translation, philological and historical study of Arab literary texts of the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries that refer to the Romanians' past, a field that I see as a priority in Romanian research, the only one that is at the same time entitled to and capable, in terms of competence, of shedding light on these texts, equally important for the Romanians and the Levantine peoples which maintained cultural and spiritual ties with the Romanian Principalities.

At the same time, I am striving to collect a corpus of edited and translated Arab Christian texts, aiming to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the language variety spoken and written by Christians in the territories of present-day Syria and Lebanon during the Ottoman era. This type of vernacular still presents unknown elements, leading to the requirement of deeper surveys until a set of specific features is properly defined that can subsequently be applied to Christian Arab literature on a large scale. This is the area where I

can contribute, by editing and analyzing unpublished Arabic manuscripts of Arab Christian authors of the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Moreover, I intend, after I complete the edition of the works of Paul of Aleppo, Makarius III Ibn al-Za'im and Athanasius Dabbās, that I have been studying for three decades, to compile a glossary of Arabic words employed by the Christian communities East of the Mediterranean, which would testify about the contacts between all languages spoken in the region and the numerous loan-words in these languages that entered literary Arabic. This research may also result in new information useful in searching for the origin of Romanian words with unknown etymology.

I am striving at the same time to contribute to the proper description of the Romanian manuscripts, old printed books and cultural items present in Arab collections and vice-versa, of the Arab ones preserved in Romania, in order to bring new proof for the Romanians' role as a "bridge" between Western Europe and the countries in Eastern Mediterranean lands until modern times.

Two salient directions become clear from the previous pages: the first, connected to my aim to enrich the philological research in the field of Arabic through surveys and studies dedicated to the Arab civilization, and especially to the Christian one in the East Mediterranean lands, and the second, the purpose to shed more light to the academic circles and the larger public the Romanians' cultural relations with the Levantine communities and the significant contribution of Romanian research to their better understanding.

Beside all this, I am keen on transmitting to the new generation of Arabic scholars the interest for the philological and historical research into the Arab Christian civilization, for manuscript editing, for the translation of Arabic texts similar to the above-mentioned ones, for post-university education in these fields, and for the establishment of personal and institutional cooperation links with the communities of Arabic scholars abroad.

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