

**„ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY OF IAȘI
FACULTY OF HISTORY**

HABILITATION THESIS

**Romanian history in the Mount Athos Archives:
Monasteries, Monks, Pilgrimages**

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Abstract

The relationships between the Romanian Principalities and the entire Orthodox area represented a fundamental framework of the Romanians' history, showing the Romanians' place and role in Europe's and the world's history. For five centuries (14th-19th), Moldavia and Wallachia represented the main cultural and material backing for the Christian peoples in the Balkan Peninsula and the Near East. Also, the Princes, boyars and the Church hierarchs supported from a material and spiritual viewpoint the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania, as well as the Orthodox in South Poland and in Ukraine. The opening of the archives in the monasteries of Mount Athos, starting with the '90s of the 20th century, offers great opportunities for a real and complete acquaintanceship of the relationships between the Romanian Principalities and this authentic centre of the Orthodoxy. I am persuaded that through my research and through the studies of other colleagues in the country and abroad, based on the very use of the documentary material in these archives, we shall offer full substance to Porfirie Uspenski's statement: none of the orthodox peoples did so much for the good of Mount Athos as the Romanians. Therefore, if the Romanians inherited from the Byzantine the patronage over Mount Athos, they naturally became the main support for the other Holy Places, especially for the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Orthodox peoples south the Danube too (Serbs, Bulgarians, Greeks), in the half millennium during which these ones were under Ottoman dominance. This is why our research will also aim at deepening the knowledge on the relationships between the Romanian Principalities and Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece. We shall also focus, using novel information, on the ecclesiastic and cultural relationships the Romanians had with the Orthodox area in south Poland and with Ukraine, in order to delineate the important part the Romanians played in Eastern Europe, during the 14th-19th centuries.

The Romanian Principalities' relationships with the Orthodox area south the Danube (the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Mount Athos, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece) and with the whole Orthodox East (the Patriarchates of Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch) during the 15th-19th centuries represented before World War I (N. Iorga) and in the period between the wars (Marcu Beza, Teodor Bodogae, Emil Turdeanu, Grigore Nandris, G. Bals, Damian P. Bogdan, Michel Lascaris, Gabriel Millet) an important subject of research, as this had the power to show the Romanians' place in Europe's and the world's history. After the second World War, because of the communist system that took hold of Romania, the research on this

subject could be made with great difficulty. Yet, the topic enjoyed the attention of important Romanian historians (Valentin Al. Georgescu, Alexandru Elian, Stefan Andreescu, Andrei Pippidi, Ștefan S. Gorovei, Gh. Moisescu, Paul Mihail, Ioan Dura, Radu Crețeanu, etc) and that of several foreign (A. Grabar, M. Chatzidakis, K. Chrysochoidis, M. Theochari, etc) and exiled Romanian specialists (Petre S. Nasturel, Emil Turdeanu, Nicoara Beldiceanu, Dumitru Nastase, Florin Marinescu). A moment of reference in the historiography of the relationships between Romanians and Mount Athos was P.S. Nasturel's book, *Le Mont Athos et les Roumains. Recherches sur leurs relations du milieu du XIVe siècle à 1654*, Rome, 1986, in which the author gathered the whole bibliography on the topic, submitted it to a severe critical examination and reached innovating conclusions.

At the same time, an event of maximal importance for the acquaintance with the relationships between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos was represented by the opening of the archives in the monasteries of Mount Athos, starting with the ninth decade of the 20th century. The Romanian researchers in exile, Dumitru Nastase and Florin Marinescu, published a first volume including brief précis of the Romanian documents (in Slavic, Romanian and Greek languages) in the Archive of the Simonopetra monastery; after 1990, other five volumes followed, compiled by scholar Florin Marinescu, including a great number of documents, coming from the archives of the monasteries Protaton, Koutloumoussi, Xeropotamu, Saint Paul and Dochiariou (at four of them, besides Koutloumoussi, I also made a contribution). After 1989, other Romanian scholars from the ecclesiastic and laic areas, focused on the study of these relationships; mainly, we have to remind of the two volumes *Marturii romanesti peste hotare. Mica enciclopedie*, vol I (1991) and II (1998), Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, edited by Virgil Candea. Ioan Moldoveanu also paid a special attention to this topic, who published several articles on the relationships between different Athonite monasteries and the Romanian Principalities, compiled in the volume *Contributii la istoria relatiilor dintre Tarile Romane si Muntele Athos. In intimpinarea a 1040 de ani de la fondarea Muntelui Athos (963-2003)*, Bucharest, 2002. Another volume was edited by A. Zubco, *Biserica din Tara Romaneasca și Moldova in secolele XIV-XVII. Relatiile cu Muntele Athos*, Chisinau, 2001, but unfortunately in this case we deal with a simple compilation. A synthesis attempt was made by Ignatie Monahul and Gheorghe Vasilescu in the volume *Romanii si Muntele Athos*, Editura Paralela 45, 2002, gathering older and newer valuable studies, but unfortunately, they violated some of the rules that should have been observed when making up a scientific edition, thus becoming mandatory to apply it to the princeps editions. Precious pieces of information could also be gathered from travel descriptions to

Mount Athos (Vasile Andru and others), but only after a thorough critical examination. Important scientific contributions were also those of scholars writing about the Romanian monachism on Athos, grouped around the monastery of Prodromu (during the last years the archimandrite Veniamin Micle has focused on this issue; see, for instance *Manuscrisele romanesti de la Prodromul, Muntele Athos*, Sfanta manastire Bistrita, 1999, 406 pp.).

Given the great number of archive documents that were brought out to light, the part the Romanians played at Athos will be really understood and defined, as well as the part that Mount Athos played in our history. The results of the research could also help clearing up some rather obscure aspects in the history of the countries in the all the Orthodox area (the ones who were part of the Byzantine Empire, but also Ukraine and Russia).

At the same time, we have in view a research of the archives here and abroad in order to identify new testimonies related to the relationships between the Romanian Principalities and Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece. About the aids the Romanians gave to the monasteries in Bulgaria wrote Ilie Barbulescu, Emil Turdeanu, Marcel Romanescu, R. Flora, Silviu Anuichi, Ion-Radu Mircea, Constantin Velichi, P. Constantinescu-Iasi, Ovidiu Marina, Ivan Duicev, Ivan Snegarov, Pavlina Bojceva, Gheorghe Lazăr, Lidia Cotovanu and others Our research will also speak about the monasteries in Greece, but it will mainly focus on exposing the relationships of Epirus with the Romanian Principalities, one of Greece's provinces that dealt much with the area north the Danube. After Ariadna Camariano-Cioran's fundamental contribution, *L'Epire et les Pays Roumains*, Athens-Ioannina, 1982, several more testimonies on the relationships between the Romanian Principalities and Epirus were signed by Petre S. Nasturel, Petronel Zahariuc, Stefan Sorin Gorovei, Andronicos Falangas and others. I have researched – using unpublished information – and studying the priceless discoveries made by Vera Tchentova in the Moscow archives, the ecclesiastic and cultural relationships the Romanians had with the Orthodox area in south Poland and with Ukraine, in order to delineate the important part the Romanians played in Eastern Europe during the 14th-19th centuries.

For this habilitation thesis, I have chosen to use the studies and articles on Romanians' relationships with Mount Athos and mostly the way Romanian history is reflected in the archives of the Holy Mountain. And that because the archives of the monasteries on Mount Athos are the largest documentary deposit for the medieval and modern history of the Romanian Principalities outside the Romanian borders, reason for which, for over two decades, I have dedicated a significant part of my scientific activity to the publication and exploitation of the Romanian documents at Mount Athos. The Romanian

documentary funds of the 20 large monasteries (in Old Slavonic, Greek, Russian, French, Romanian, and in Romanian with Cyrillic characters) came into existence in the 15th–19th centuries, both on Mount Athos, and in the subordinated monasteries in the Romanian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. From here, after the secularization of monasteries' land (1863), the documents were taken to the Holy Mountain. The secularisation of the monastic wealth led to the emergence of significant dissension between Mount Athos and Romania. Hence, very few of the documents, manuscripts, votive inscriptions, religious attires, mural paintings, etc, could actually be researched. The few ones included in international scientific circuit were discovered on the occasion of researching the general history of the Holy Mountain or of the relationships between them and other Orthodox nations. Another small part of the evidence concerning the Romanian support of Mount Athos was preserved in Romania, in the monastic funds at the National Romanian Archives and at the National Archives in Iași (after moving the monastic funds of documents here) and at the National Archives of the Republic of Moldova, as copies or translations (see, for instance, the so-called “Asachi Registers”, currently preserved at the Archives in Iași or Fund 220 at the Archives in Kishinev), or in the exceptional collection of Historical documents at the Romanian Academy Library, where one may find quite many original documents left in the country, as well as dozens of abstracts in Greek (e.g., the DCIXV and DCIXVI packs), some of them being published by N. Iorga in the “Hurmuzaki” collection.

The beginning of the systematic research of the Romanian archives at Mount Athos may be traced to the ninth decade of the 20th century, as I have mentioned before, when the researchers Dumitru Nastase and Florin Marinescu published a brief catalogue of the Romanian archive in the Simonopetra monastery. After 1990, besides the five volumes in Greek, elaborated by Florin Marinescu and by his collaborators (Koutloumoussi, Iviron, Dionysiou, Xiropotamou, Dochiariou, St. Paul), one of them being myself, and a volume of abstracts of the documents within the central archive of the Holy Mountain at Protaton, I coordinated the publication of four volumes in Romanian. One of them comprised full documents: the archive of the monastery of Xenofon; three volumes include the detailed abstracts of the documents; two volumes from the archive of the Xiropotamou monastery and one from the archive of the Simonopetra monastery). There were also three volumes in Greek (the Greek edition of the volume of documents from the archive of the Simonopetra monastery will hopefully be published soon in Greece, and a volume from the archive of the Xiropotamou monastery, featured in 2014, in Athens). To this effort of publishing the Romanian documents from Mount Athos, we benefited from the participation of Boško I.

Bojović. In 2008, he published the Romanian archive from the “Serbian” monastery of Hilandar. The progress of knowledge in the field of Romanian medieval and pre-modern history is closely connected to the publication rhythm of the unpublished documentary treasure within the archives of Mount Athos. On our path for the publication of the unpublished documentary materials at the Holy Mountain, the next stop is the Vatopedi monastery. From its the archive – along with Florin Marinescu – I published in the last decade a couple dozen Slavic and Romanian-Cyrillic documents. There are scientific exchanges concerning the monasteries of the Great Lavra and of Esphigmenou, but thus far they have had few concrete outcomes.

From a scientific perspective, the research of the Romanian archives at Mount Athos is of great importance. This is one of the few places from where one may bring new information regarding the history of Romanians and of the entire Eastern Christendom. In the last three years, I have worked for the full publication of the documents within two new Romanian archives at Mount Athos (the archive of the Zographou monastery and the archive of the Dochiariou monastery). Their publication would enrich significantly many fields of the Romanian history. The archive of the Zographou monastery comprises approximately 250 documents (in Slavic, Romanian, Greek, Bulgarian and Russian), of the 15th-19th centuries, 30 of which are already known, as they became part of the scientific circuit due to the research initiated in late 19th century by the Serbian, Bulgarian and Russian researchers. Furthermore, the archive of the monastery hosts a great number of document registers, dating to the 18th-19th centuries, never used in historiography thus far. One of the registers of the Dobrovă^ș monastery – metochion of the Zographou monastery – elaborated in 1839, comprising abstracts of almost 600 old documents, is in print within the journal “Studii Și Materiale de Istorie Medie”, in a paper I wrote along with my colleague Gheorghe Lazăr. The Zographou monastery was the first Athonite monastic establishment to which Moldavia granted support, as early as during Alexandru cel Bun, and the task of helping this monastery was carried on by his successors and completed by Stephen the Great. Following all these gestures of support, Stephen the Great considered himself the founder of the monastery; various observers appreciated the crucial role played by the Romanian prince in the history of the Zographou monastery. In case of this monastery, I have also researched the Romanian manuscripts preserved in the library of the monastery, as well as on microfilm in the library of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. I have also studied other testimonies attesting to the Romanian aids for this Athonite monastery (inscriptions, flags, votive paintings, liturgical vessels, etc), which have been insufficiently studied or downright ignored thus far.

The archive of the Dochiariou monastery comprises around 900 documents (in Slavic, Romanian, Greek and Russian), of the 15th-19th centuries, for which the researcher Florin Marinescu published a catalogue of abstracts (*Η Ιερά Μονή Δοχειαρίου στη Ρουμανία. Τη λένε τα έγγραφα, Άγιον Όρος*, 2009). This year, however, in collaboration with Florin Marinescu and Ioan-Augustin Guriță, I will publish a volume of documents in Romanian. I will also compare, complete and correct the Romanian documentary fund preserved in the archive of the Dochiariou monastery to the documents hosted by the National Romanian Archives, to the fund of the Slobozia lui Enache monastery, and mostly to the Romanian-Cyrillic copies from the splendid Register of this monastery (manuscript No. 314, 591 pages).

The in habilitation thesis hereof, I have presented some of my scientific contributions since 2008, after obtaining – following a contest – the didactic and scientific title of Professor. I refer here to the research studied circumscribed to the sphere of the relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos, from the 15th century to the Great Union. These studies do not concern only the history of these relations, but also fragments of Romanian history, which I was able to reconstruct only after discovering and publishing the documents within the archives at Mount Athos. Each time, the newly found information were completed and nuanced by using the archival funds and collections in the country and in Kishinev and through a meticulous and thorough insight into the historiography of the matter.

I have divided these contributions into two main chapters: I) monasteries and II) monks and pilgrimages. I organised the first chapter by the position occupied by each monastery within the Athonite hierarchy, starting with the “capital” of Mount Athos (i.e. Karyes – Protaton) and continuing with the monasteries of: Xiropotamou, Zographou, Karakallou, Filotheou, Simonopetra and Xenofon. Within the recent years, I have published several materials and I have presented papers at scientific events. Such papers were based on the documents from the archives of Vatopedi, Iviron and Dyonisiou, but I have not included them in this thesis. In the second chapter, I featured three journeys (pilgrimages) at Mount Athos, an interesting correspondence of a Romanian monk residing at the Holy Mountain (Maxim Hagiul) and a study about the situation of Mount Athos from late 19th century to the Great Union (1918). Instead of conclusions, I thought it would be better to present an account about one of my scientific “pilgrimages” and more, at Mount Athos.

The first study concerns the constitution and functioning of the Orthodox Theological College within the Three Hierarchs monastery; it was founded in 1640 by Vasile Lupu. The monastery dedicated to the three hierarchs, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom, was founded by Vasile Lupu for a theological college to be organized there.

This institution, similar with the one in Kiev, was created on 9 May 1640. Its mission was to educate young people who would subsequently be able to participate in theological discussions and polemics with Catholic and Protestant scholars. Students were recruited from elementary school graduates in Moldavia and came from families of lesser boyars, priests, tradesmen, and craftsmen, or from rich families. All expenses related to their education were covered by the Prince, whereas expenses related to the small group of professors who came from Kiev, including the notable Sofronie Poceatki, were covered from the annual revenue of the villages of Răchiteni, Tămășeni, and Iugani, as well as from the Prince's Feredeul, levied by the "fervent defender of the holy eastern faith" and donated to the Three Hierarchs Monastery. The college functioned until 1644-1645, when a new building (the "greater college") was completed outside the monastery. In the following years, 1646-1647, the monks from Kiev, who had initially made the teaching corps, were replaced with Greek monks, and the activity of the college lost momentum. Ten years later, in the spring of 1656, efforts were made by the new ruling prince of Moldavia, Gheorghe Ștefan, to reintroduce scholars from Kiev and revive this important educational institution of the Moldavian Principality.

The second study – developed based on the documents within the archive of Protaton, – also concerns the Three Hierarchs monastery, but this time I focus on its historical evolution. Hence, this article presents lesser known or previously unpublished material on the history of the Three Hierarchs monastery, found in the rich archive of Protaton. As the Three Hierarchs monastery was, and still is, located in the heart of the city of Iași, many Moldavian documents from the 17th and 18th centuries related to different monasteries (e.g. Golia, Cașin, Copou) and to various families (e.g. Ureche, Hăbășescu, Buhuș, Ruset) had been deposited in its archive. The present study investigates the monastic archive of the Three Hierarchs, which is preserved today in the Romanian and Athonite archives, and focuses on the lesser known history of the making and the growth of the monastic domain. The domain of the Three Hierarchs monastery included several tens of villages, owned entirely or partially, as well as numerous other properties (grapevines, ponds, bridges, mills, houses, merchants' shops). The geographical nuclei of the domain were the Moldavian regions of Iași, Bacău and Trușești. The domain grew gradually and one may identify three distinct phases. The first one is related to the donations given to the monastery by its founder, Vasile Lupu, by his family and by his loyal boyars. The second phase of growth, less impressive, was due to the donations made by the descendants of those boyars and merchants whose good fortune in Moldavia was due to Vasile Lupu. During the third phase, which covers the whole of the 18th century, the

properties of the monastery had been preserved and increased due to the Moldavians' devotion for Saint Paraskeva. I will reprise, as soon as possible, in a special study the "field" of the Three Hierarchs monastery within the city of Bacău and the surroundings.

The Romanian archive of the Xiropotamou monastery comprises several hundred documents, which I have published in two volumes, along with Florin Marinescu and Ioan Caproșu. In the introductory studies, which I penned, I included several information on the history of the relations between this Athonite monastery and the Romanian Principalities, within which a central role was played by the monasteries of Plumbuita in Bucharest and Clatia and Dancu in Iași. In this thesis, I have collected several data – more important – from the introductions of the two volumes about the histories of the three Romanian monasteries, impossible to discover elsewhere. Concerning of the Dancu monastery, which unfortunately does not exist anymore, I presented two papers in the recent years (about the fights between the Greek abbots from the first decades of the 19th century and about the buildings that were part of the monastic complex in the centre of Iași), which I will publish soon.

The Romanian archive of the Zographou monastery is very important for the history of Romanians; along with other colleagues in Romania (Gheorghe Lazăr) and Bulgaria (Ivan Biliarsky and Dimiter Peev), I have studied it in recent years. In this thesis, I included a study about the history of the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Zographou monastery, as it reflects in the Romanian historiography, before the Romanian archive became open for research. In the perspective of publishing the Romanian archive within the Zographou monastery at Mount Athos, it was necessary to assess the state-of-the-art in the relations between the Athonite monastery and Moldavia from the 15th century (1416) to the secularisation of the monastic wealth (1863). In this paper, I have pointed out and analysed the documents published up to that point; among the documents published, most of them are preserved in the archives in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, while other (significantly fewer) were edited based on the originals preserved in the archive of the Zographou monastery. Furthermore, I presented the Romanian manuscripts and ecclesiastical items of which we know they are in the Zographou monastery, as well as data within the history of the two greatest monasteries in Moldavia: Dobrovă and Căpriană, which were submitted to the Zographou monastery. Quite recently, the Romanian-Bulgarian team of researchers, of which I am the leader, published a succinct catalogue featuring the abstracts of the over two hundred documents from the archive of Zographou, in a volume describing everything we know about the history of this important "Bulgarian" Lavra at Mount Athos.

The second contribution, also concerning partially the Zographou monastery, brings to light the history of the Aron Vodă monastery near Iași, which was for a while a metochion of the Athonite monastery. This paper will be featured in the 2019 tome of the “«A. D. Xenopol» History Institute Yearbook”. The Aron Vodă monastery bordered the eastern side of Iași; it was placed near the route used by the Tatars and the Cossacks in their way to the princely court, reason for which it had a turmoil-filled history. Many times, the armies of the Tatars and the Cossacks made their camps near the monastery and they stirred horror in the monastic community, because they destroyed the buildings near the church. Some events within the political history of Moldavia are related to the Aron Vodă monastery. In addition, the monastery’s church was one of the finest architectonic symbols of late 16th century. Its construction shows that our crafty builders did not just imitate or copy the buildings of the past; they actually strived and managed to bring new elements, which were adopted in Moldavia and later included in the ecclesiastical architecture of the subsequent centuries.

The confusion dominating the Romanian historiography – caused by the sequencing of the two monasteries in the territory of Iași, founded by Alexandru Lăpușneanu and by his son, Aron Tiranul – was solved by Alexandru Gōna. He determined – upon a thorough study of the documents – that in the eastern part of Iași another church used to exist, different from the one we know: “there is the monastery of Greci, «founded at the foot of the hills» by Alexandru Lăpușneanu, endowed with the villages of Nicorești, Selicicani and Giurovul by the founder, then by Iancu Sasu and Petru Șchiopu, submitted by the last to the Zographou monastery at Mount Athos; and then there’s the Aron Vodă monastery, built on the hilltop called < today > Aroneanu, endowed with the villages of Averești and Rânzești by Aron vodă and submitted to the monastery of Sozopole by Radu Mihnea and subsequently by Prince Alexandru <Coconul> to Halchi.”

These two places of worship were mistaken one for the other based on the documents issued by the chancelleries of Princes Ieremia Movilă and Radu Mihnea, which put together the wealth of the former “Greci” monastery and of the Aron Vodă monastery, when they were submitted to the monastery St John the Baptist in Sozopole, and subsequently to the monastery of the Dormition in the island of Halchi, near Constantinople.

The Aron Vodă monastery was not one of the greatest Romanian monasteries and it did not play a very important role in the Romanian culture, but its historical importance is provided by the architectural value of the church and by the participation of the monastic community to the economic life of Moldavia and of Iași, in particular. The last fact was due to the rather large estate put together through the joint effort of the abbots and of the entire

synod near the city. The monastery's prosperity was related directly to the size and quality of the estate administered, as well as by the know-how of the abbots concerning its management. Both conditions were happily met in the second half of the 17th century, when the Aron Vodă monastery experienced the wealthiest times: it comprised a vast estate and it benefitted from the wittiest abbots. The great variety of the components making up the monastic estate, the vicinity to the city hosting the Moldavian throne of the villages, the mills, the ponds, the orchards and the apiaries contributed to the active presence of the Aron Vodă monastery in the economic life of Iași.

After the secularisation of monastic wealth and the transformation of the church of the Aron Vodă monastery into a secular church, the priests assigned to this place of worship ensured the spiritual services for the inhabitants of the Aroneanu village and, from time to time, for the Iași inhabitants who climbed the hill to listen to their inspiring words and to enjoy the beauty of the princely foundation, dedicated to the Saint Hierarch Nicholas, the Miracle-Maker.

For the Karakallou monastery, I have published a 1643 note on a *Gospel* concerning the Precista monastery in Galāi; on this occasion, I provided new information on the most important ecclesiastical establishment in Galāi and on its founders. This paper adds to an older scientific contribution about the monasteries in Galāi, based on the documents of the Romanian archive within the St Paul monastery at Mount Athos.

Concerning the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Filotheou monastery, information was very scarce until I published (2018) several highly interesting documents of the 18th century, comprising princely donations in cash for this monastery.

In case of the Simonopetra monastery, after publishing the Romanian archive – counting 767 documents in Slavonic, Romanian and Greek – I managed to underpin aspects of the relations between the Athonite monastery and Wallachia. The Simonopetra monastery had more than one metochion in Wallachia, but the most important of them was the Mihai Vodă monastery in Bucharest, submitted by its founder Michael the Brave – Wallachian prince (1593-1601). Hence, starting from these documents, in the article featured in this thesis, I was able to write a history of the Mihai Vodă monastery, or better said, the preliminaries of a history, which includes the main moments within the life of this monastic establishment from its foundation to mid-19th century, as well as a list of the abbots, the components and organisation of the monastery's estates, etc. Besides the history of this great monasteries in Bucharest, through this paper, I highlighted great new information about the Bolintin monastery, one of the oldest monastic establishments in Wallachia, about the St

Nicholas monastery in Bucharest (a foundation of lady Caplea and Ghiorma the *ban*) and about the history of Bucharest.

Moreover, the Xenofon monastery is featured in this thesis within a study about its relations with the Romanian Principalities based on the Romanian archive, comprising documents dating to the period 1614 – 1862. Many of these documents concern the history of the Roaba monastery, in the Dolj County. The volume also includes the other historical records or “traces” of the aids provided by Romanians to the monastery of Xenofon at the Holy Mountain (votive paintings, manuscripts, ecclesiastical attires); the most important of them is the Tetraevangelion gifted to the monastery in 1554 by Alexandru Lăpuşneanu.

I dedicated the second part of this thesis to the Romanian pilgrimages at the Holy Mountain and to Romanians residing at the Holy Mountain. In case of pilgrimages, a turning point occurred in the second half of the 18th century, when many monks within the monasteries of Moldavia – mostly within the s Neam̄ and Secu monasteries – chose to relocate at Mount Athos, as their abbot had chosen in the middle of the century (i.e. Saint Paisius Velicikovsky). Some of them moved to the Holy Mountain, while others opted for a pilgrimage, thus returning to the monasteries of Neamţ and Secu. Among those of the second category, some wrote about their pilgrimage; one of them is the scholar hieromonk Chiriac Dobrovici from the Secu monastery. The description of the Holy Mountain made by the pilgrim monk was published partially in the interwar period, but through this study, I provided a complete reconstruction of this small *proschinitar*. From the same monastery of Neamt-Secu, the hieromonk Andronic went twice in pilgrimage to Mount Athos and he wrote about the second one in a large manuscript, for which he used extensively a “pilgrimage guide” drafted up by a Russian monk, a few years prior. In the introductory study, which I reprised here, I have reconstructed the biography of hieromonk Andronic, thus offering new information and contributing to shedding light on lesser known aspects within the life of one of the most important monks within the Lavras of Neamt-Secu and Noul Neam̄. Furthermore, I included in this chapter an anonymous account regarding a pilgrimage of 1862, with a very picturesque description of the itinerary from Moldavia to Mount Athos.

Concerning the Romanian monks residing at the Holy Mountain, I have chosen a rich correspondence between a monk from the Neam̄ -Secu monastery – Maxim hagiul – with monks, nuns and boyars in Moldavia, including important data about life in the monasteries of Athos and in the monasteries of Moldavia, as well as information pertaining to the Moldavian social life in mid-19th century. Finally, the last paper regards the situation of the Romanian monks within the hermitages and chapels at Mount Athos in late 19th century and

the first decades of the 20th century, featuring data about their behaviour during the First World War, as well as their attitude towards the Great Union of Romanians (1918). Concerning the state of the Romanian community at the Holy Mountain during those decades, I will be providing details in the future, based on other unpublished documents that I have since discovered. Instead of conclusions for this thesis, I have chosen a text written after a scientific “pilgrimage” I took several years ago.

Given that this is a habilitation thesis – thus scrutinising the past, analysing the present and interrogating the future – I hope that there is no doubt regarding the fruitful decade from obtaining my Professorship to the present. There are many scientific materials to be assessed; they are premises for the publication of other studies and documents regarding the history of the relations between the Romanian Principalities and Mount Athos, as well as pages within the history of Romanians, as they may be reconstructed using the archives of Athonite monasteries.

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Prof. univ. dr. Petronel Zahariuc