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## Romanian Canadiana<sup>1</sup>

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The rise of Canadian Studies in Romania, particularly in the academia, as well as their recent (relative) decline, is presented with emphasis on the last twenty-five years. Individual interest and enthusiasm as well as the foundation of CEACS contributed to the Canadian Studies “boom” in 2000-2012, when Canadian Studies Centers were founded in several important Romanian universities, the number of Canadian Studies classes at BA and MA levels increased, large research projects were completed, PhD theses were initiated and quite a few defended.

**Key words:** Romanian-Canadian relations; Canadian Studies in Romania; CEACS; research projects; teaching; academic events

### 1. The broad picture

The last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the beginnings of the Romanian migration towards Canada, but the Canadian state was brought to the attention of the average Romanian as a well-defined political and cultural entity only starting with the significant year 1967, when a touring Canadian exhibition revealed to us the history and the main attractions of a country celebrating the centennial in its present form. From 1990 onwards, in the context of globalization as well as liberalization in the Central and East European countries, the process of emigration resulted, among

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<sup>1</sup> We owe a debt of gratitude to our colleagues from several Romanian universities who contributed to the compilation of the data presented below: Ana Olos (Baia Mare), Monica Bottez (Bucharest), Michaela Mudure (Cluj-Napoca), Carmen Andrei (Galați), Rodica Dimetriu, Maria Pavel and Florin Irimia (Iași), Dorin Comșa (Sibiu), Elena-Brândușa Steiciuc (Suceava), Andreea Șerban and Ileana Neli Eiben (Timișoara).

other things, in an increasing number of diasporic Romanian authors in Canada; a growing interest in cultural diversity; the development of new (culture-related) curricular areas in Romanian universities with American and Canadian Studies at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Simultaneously, an unprecedented number of translations from Canadian literature flooded the book market.

In 2009, the celebration of 90 years of diplomatic relations between Canada and Romania occasioned several important academic events that marked the anniversary,<sup>2</sup> events which were partly organized with the support of the Canadian Embassy in Bucharest through its representative, Ligia Marincuș. (For the way the 2009 event was marked by the Romanian Embassy in Ottawa, see <http://www.alternativaonline.ca/ComunicatAmbasadaRomaniei0905.html>.) Ten years before, another Romanian representative of the Canadian Embassy, the late Elena Filipoiu, contributed substantially to strengthening cultural relations between the two countries and stimulating academic research in Romania. These days, however, when we celebrate one century of diplomatic relations, it is very likely that only this article will symbolically mark the event.

Tracing the story of Canadian studies in Romania, we can notice how much it has depended on the stimuli – the “carrots” – coming from the Canadian Government through various grants and the involvement of Canadian Embassy representatives. Of at least equal importance has been Romania’s membership in the Central European Association for Canadian Studies (CEACS)/ Association d’Études Canadiennes en Europe Centrale (AECEC), which has brought together Canadianists in the region in many ways, such as common academic projects that we will present below.

However, the history of Romanian-Canadian relations should not be reduced to the linguistic, literary, and cultural (mainly academic) projects of which the authors of the present article are aware. An excellent guide for the researchers interested in the complexities of Romanian-Canadian relations is the impressive 2012 volume *Relații româno-canadiene: bibliografie generală* by Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu and Silvia-Adriana Tomescu<sup>3</sup> compiled under the auspices of the University of Bucharest and of the “Carol I” Central University Library of Bucharest. This volume brings together general bibliographic information related to dictionaries, encyclopedias, albums, archives, diplomatic relations, agreements, conventions and treatises, as well as more specialized bibliography in the fields of history, anthropology, ethnology, business and finances, social economy, law, religion, philosophy, psychology, sociology, linguistics, literature, cultural studies, emigration, geography, geology, tourism and travelling, science, education, medicine, nuclear physics, sports, media, “webliography,” and miscellanea.

Coming back to the area we are familiar with and we are going to present below, let us remark that on top of the implementation of Canada-related classes at BA and MA levels, Romanian Canadianists in several Romanian universities took

<sup>2</sup> In Iași, the event brought together local academics dealing with Anglophone and Francophone Canadian Studies, students of the American Studies MA program (with brief presentations under the general heading „Glimpses of Canada”), high officials of the University, representatives of the Canadian Embassy as well as two special guests from Canada, history professor Walter Epp and film producer Dan Schlanger.

<sup>3</sup> With the collaboration of Simona Șerban, Șubă Șerban, Adriana Spatan, Oana Dimetriu, Monica Pricopie.

an active part in the organization of Canadian Studies in the region, which led to the foundation of the Central European Association of Canadian Studies (CEACS). This association brings together university teachers, researchers, and students from the broadly interpreted Central European region who do work related to Canada. It traces its roots to the first meeting of Canadianists from this part of Europe in Budmerice, Slovakia, in April 1995 and the organization of the First International Conference of Central European Canadianists in Brno, the Czech Republic, three years later, mainly through the inspired efforts of the leading figure, Don Sparling, a Canadian academic living in the Czech Republic, whose life has largely been identified with the life of CEACS for almost two decades. For the next five years, a Central European Steering Committee for Canadian Studies guided the activities of Canadianists in the region. **The Second International Conference of Central European Canadianists was organized in Bucharest in 2001<sup>4</sup>** and made an important contribution to the negotiations that led up to the foundation of the association in the summer of 2003. The Romanian Chapter of CEACS kept growing up to 76 members around 2010 and saw a decrease after 2012 to the present number of 23 members. Most of them are the same enthusiasts that were the main champions of Canadian Studies ten years ago.

## 2. Teaching Canadian Studies at the Academic Level

Before the founding of CEACS, which stimulated the more structured approaches to Canadian Studies at the academic level, individual initiatives had marked the beginnings of teaching Canadian Studies in several Romanian universities, which gradually led to the foundation of local Canadian Studies centers.

In 1997, Professors Irina Bădescu (French Department) and Monica Bottez (English Department) started the Canadian Studies MA Program at the University of **Bucharest**, which is now a module within the framework of Intercultural Communication Strategies, a literature and language MA program. It provides an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study of Canadian culture and society in a European comparative perspective, theoretical courses focusing on multiculturalism, intercultural discourse in literature, and cultural linguistic overlaps. In addition to media communication classes, the program offers courses in Anglophone and Francophone literature and culture, interethnic relations in Canadian society, Canadian history, the Canadian political system, as well as courses to improve oral and written fluency in English and French, including business correspondence, all this to meet the requirements and needs for inter- and cross-cultural communication and labor market opportunities. Among the Romanian professors who teach the courses are Monica Bottez, Daniela Roventă-Frumușani, and Ileana Mihăilă. Besides, the program benefits from the contribution of experts from Canada, Germany, France, Czech Republic, etc. The list is too long to put here and partly consists of visiting specialists and artists that lectured in more than one university (e.g., Konrad Gross, Walter Epp, Brendan F. Edwards, Flavia Cosma).

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<sup>4</sup> Professor Monica Bottez was the main Romanian organizer of the 2001 event and Romanian representative in the Central European Network for Canadian Studies (1998-2004).

Professor Monica Bottez was not only pivotal in founding the Canadian Studies MA program and in organizing or co-organizing various events related to Canadian Studies, she also supervised an impressive number of doctoral theses on Canadian topics (see 3.2 *infra*) and authored the first volume of studies published in Romania that was entirely devoted to Canadian literature: *Infinite Horizons. Canadian Fiction in English* (2004, second edition 2010). Her research was supported by two FEP grants (1998, 2002) and a research grant from the North American Studies Institute of the Free University, Berlin (1999).

The idea of learning more about Canada at the North University of **Baia Mare**<sup>5</sup> came to Dr. Ana Olos, then teaching British and American literature, when, in 1995, as a beneficiary of a Cultural Studies Seminar grant from the University of Stuttgart, Germany, she witnessed Timothy Findley's readings from his novels. With a PhD in comparative literature, Professor Olos was quick to see both that Mr. Findley was one of the most interesting representatives of postmodernism, and that Canadian literature had to be included in the teaching of English language literatures. Returning home with the writer's books, she began to study his work with an aim to learn more about Canada and its literature. Her endeavors resulted in several volumes she authored or translated, among them two books devoted to Findley's work (2001 and 2004) and one, entitled *The Interdisciplinary Teaching of Canadian Studies & Essays on the Border* (2007), meant to encourage the teaching in Romanian universities of the recently introduced interdisciplinary field. She has also translated poetry from and into English and wrote original poetry both in Romanian and in English.

An important incentive was a donation of books from Professor Maureen Korp, who was at that time teaching at the University of Bucharest, Romania, and who came to speak about Canadian women's art to the students of North University of Baia Mare. This donation served to introduce Dr. Ana Olos and assistant lecturer Horea Nașcu – who was in charge of seminars in British and American culture and civilization after attending several courses and workshops the British Council in Bucharest organized in Romania during the 1990s – to the specific topics of Canadian Studies. As they were aware of Canada's official bilingualism and multiculturalism, it was only natural for them to share their interest with Dr. Dana Puiu; a graduate of French and English, she held a PhD in drama and taught courses in French culture and civilization as well as Francophone literature. Having included writers from Quebec in her classes, she was one step ahead in her knowledge of Canada.<sup>6</sup> In the meantime, they learned Professors Irina Bădescu and Monica Bottez had founded a Canadian Studies MA program at the University of Bucharest in 1997. That gave Dr. Olos' team the idea of starting a similar program in Baia Mare.

Dr. Ana Olos applied for a Canadian government grant to visit Canada and, in the summer of 1998, she attended Canadian Studies courses and seminars in Ottawa, where she met academics from different parts of the world sharing their experience in teaching about Canada. She visited Timothy Findley at Stratford, read at Robarts Library in Toronto, and met the faculty of Canadian Studies at Wilfrid

<sup>5</sup> At present, the Baia Mare University is a "northern extension" of the Technical University of Cluj Napoca. See <https://www.optiuni.ro/specializations/2956>.

<sup>6</sup> Dana Puiu is the author of two books devoted to Francophone literature in Canada, both published in 2005.

Laurier University in Waterloo. In the course of the exchanges with them, Dr. Olos realised that at that point, given the institutional framework of their home university in Baia Mare, they should begin by teaching at an undergraduate level and only after gaining a few years of experience, start an MA program. Similarly to Dr. Olos, several other Romanian Canadianists benefited from Canadian government grants, with equally good results for the dissemination of Canadian Studies in Romania.

In the spring term of 1999, Dr. Ana Olos held the first series of lectures and seminars on Southern Ontario Gothic. Upon her return from Canada in 2000, Dr. Dana Puiu she taught the first courses in French Canadian literature. In 2000, lectures and seminars in Canadian Studies were included in the syllabus of the newly founded Applied Modern Languages section. One semester was in English (A. Olos and H. Naşcu) for the third-year students and another one in French (Dana Puiu) for the same students in the following semester, which gave them the possibility to compare the two approaches to the discipline. The decision of several students to write their BA graduation papers about Canadian topics was proof of the program's success. Meanwhile, the three teachers had also managed to found a Canadian Studies resource center. With no institutional support to hire staff for the center, most of its activities had to be done on a voluntary basis, to the extent that rather complex teaching loads permitted, just as in the other Canadian Studies centers opened in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, and Iaşi.

The two-year MA program in Canadian Studies unfolded from 2004 to 2018, being one of the two MA programs of this kind in Romania. Although the first two years were considered experimental, the official recognition from the Ministry of Education coming only after that, the number of applicants was around thirty in 2004 and in 2005. Among those to register were also some of the members of the teaching staff of the foreign languages department, such as Horea Naşcu (already teaching some seminars), Anamaria Felecan, and Aliteea Turtureanu,<sup>7</sup> the latter two being determined to take up teaching Canadian Studies after graduation from this program.

Apart from some general introductory courses, like the methodology of cultural studies, terminology, anthropology, and academic writing, the MA curriculum contained courses in Canadian culture and civilization (in both languages), multiculturalism, Canadian federalism and democracy, aboriginal people and immigrants, and so on. For those who needed to improve their command of either French or English, there were optional practical language courses.

At the beginning of the MA program, given the lack of specialists in the field, the faculty had to accept that some of the disciplines would be taught in Romanian. Thus, from bilingual, the MA program became trilingual, which proved a relief to those whose knowledge of either English or French was still to be upgraded. Other members of the foreign languages department and members of other departments now joined the teaching team; among them, the dean of the faculty, Professor Georgeta Corniţă (Communication Studies) and Professor Constantin Corniţă (Anthropology). As for the two-semester course in Federalism and Local Administration, it was taught by the then mayor of Baia Mare, Dr. Christian Anghel. One of the most successful courses was on Canadian film, taught by professor and writer

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<sup>7</sup> Author of *Translinguisme et transculture dans l'oeuvre de Nancy Huston* (2014).



Adrian Oțoiu, successful supervisor of many BA and MA graduates and editor of conference proceedings.

Special mention should be made of the contribution of Dr. Crina Bud (graduate of Romanian-French), who after a FRP<sup>8</sup> grant from the Canadian government, took up the courses on Romanian Diaspora writers. She also became an active member of the CEACS Advisory Board as a representative of the Romanian Canadianists.<sup>9</sup> She currently teaches at Glendon College, York University, Canada.

Along the years, some of the disciplines were taught by visiting professors either from Bucharest (e.g., Professor Daniel Scrădeanu), residents from Canada (e.g., historian Dr. Brendan F. Edwards, Postdoctoral Fellow, resident at NUBA for eight months, 2009-2010), or Canadian interns: Theresa Way-Lun Ho (2002-2003) and Marie-Claude Villemure (2005-2006), each with six-month stays on Canadian government grants at North University.

Occasional lectures were given by Canadian writers, artists, or professors visiting the country and the region, keynote speakers at conferences, some of them returning after their first stay in Baia Mare. Among them were Professor Donna Patrick from Brock University, St Catharines; Professor Joella Gipson, guest of the Baia Mare Rotary Club; Professor Maureen Korp; non-fiction writer Myrna Kostash; author and professor Stephen Henighan (University of Guelph); Professor Michael Devine (University of Acadia); Professor Walter Epp (Lakehead University), who taught throughout the country and continued his seminars with the students online; writer and professor George Elliott Clarke (University of Toronto); singer and artist Jennifer Garrett from the Artichokan Art Center; as well as members of the Romanian diaspora; poet and translator Flavia Cosma, who was present in Baia Mare on several occasions; professor Călin Andrei Mihăilescu (University of Western Ontario, London); poet, drama critic, and translator Diana Manole (Toronto).

The graduates of the program generally wrote their theses in either English or French; nevertheless, they were allowed to choose to write in Romanian when they had a supervisor from outside the CSC MA program. As in all centers, some of the students applied for and received grants to do research at the Brno Centre for Canadian Studies in the Czech Republic; others had the opportunity to be admitted at Canadian universities, e.g., Rita Graban (doctoral studies at the University of Southern Ontario).

In the 90s, a **Cluj-Napoca** professor, the late Aurel Sasu, won several grants and academic positions that brought him closer to Romanian communities in the USA and Canada. He used this opportunity exquisitely, and the result was a number of volumes devoted to Romanian culture overseas: *Cultura română în Statele Unite și Canada* (I, Presa; II, Nostalgia românească), București, 1993; *Dicționarul scriitorilor români din Statele Unite și Canada*, București, 2001; *Cultura românească în Statele Unite și Canada* (III, Societățile culturale), 2002; *Comunitățile românești din Statele Unite și Canada*, 2003. An interest in the Canadian space seems to have been catching on in

<sup>8</sup> Faculty Research Program.

<sup>9</sup> She had been preceded on this post by Monica Bottez, Voichița Sasu, and Rodica Albu. Cristina Petraș is the current president of the Romanian Chapter and country representative in the CEACS Advisory Board.

the family: Professor Voichița Sasu<sup>10</sup> founded the Center for Canadian and Quebec Studies at the Babes-Bolyai University in 1995. From the beginning it was based on the cooperation between the English and the French Departments and was led by Voichița Sasu and Liviu Cotrău until 2006, when Liviu Cotrău moved to the Sapienția University in Oradea. Voichița Sasu was director, with Michaela Mudure as deputy director, until 2018; when she became honorary director, Michaela Mudure was appointed executive director, Simona Jisa deputy director, and Octavian More secretary. Since 2010, Michaela Mudure has also coordinated PhD programs, the first completed PhD project being that of Oana-Meda Păloșanu, whose (excellent) thesis is entitled *Constructing a Hyphenated Japanese Feminine Identity in an American and Canadian Context*.

The Center has a French library and an English library with a total of about 900 books. Every year, special Canadian Studies students' workshops are organized by Michaela Mudure. One of the former Cluj-Napoca students, Denisa-Adriana Oprea, continued her doctoral and postdoctoral studies in Canadian universities and currently teaches at SNSPA (The National School for Political and Administrative Studies) in Bucharest. Together with Brendan F.R. Edwards, she is also co-editor of a volume on Canadian studies (2012).

The interest in Canadian studies at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași dates back to the 1990s, and is linked to the work of Constantin Pavel and Maria Pavel, professors in the French Department. Their respective scholarly interests: Quebec literature, and French varieties in Canada, are part of the French Department's orientation towards the study of the Francophone world, Francophone literatures, and variation in the French language. The Francophone Studies postgraduate program, which started in 1993, had a strong Canadian Studies aspect through the courses in Francophone Literatures and Varieties of French, taught by Constantin Pavel and Maria Pavel, respectively. In 2005, the Francophone Studies program became a master's degree program with a separate course in French-Canadian literature. The study of French language varieties in Canada was also included in the French Variation course taught as part of the FFL didactics and intercultural education MA program, opened at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University's Faculty of Letters in 2007. After the retirement of Constantin Pavel, the course of French-Canadian Literature was taken over by Corina Panaitescu and it is currently taught at MA level as a module within the framework of Francophone Literatures.<sup>11</sup>

Since the retirement of Maria Pavel, French varieties in Canada have been taught by Cristina Petraș and are now integrated in the course entitled "French and the French-speaking World: Variation, Society, and Linguistic Policies."<sup>12</sup> The relationship between language and society, language contact, language policies, official

<sup>10</sup> Voichița Sasu is the author of several books, two of which are devoted to the literature of Quebec (2005 and 2015). She is also the translator of several books by Anne Hébert.

<sup>11</sup> The course aims to introduce students to the complexity of the Canadian reality (especially that of Quebec), the diversity of a multicultural civilization that allowed and encouraged the birth of a clearly distinctive Francophone literature.

<sup>12</sup> The description of linguistic particularities is integrated in an approach to the phenomena underlying the expansion of the French language and the socio-linguistic and socio-historical contexts in which the Francophonie in general, and the Canadian Francophonie in particular, have developed.

language minorities are topics that allow for an understanding of the Canadian society as a whole.

In the English Department, Rodica Albu, a specialist in the study of varieties of Present-day English, who had included “English in Canada” as a permanent element of her “English varieties” class (BA level) since the early 90s, suggested that a course of lectures in Canadian Studies should be taught as part of the MA program in American Studies, thus redefining the notion of “American” as “North-American”, with the inclusion of the Canadian space. The course was taught to first-year MA students in American Studies for two semesters in 2008-2018, Florin Irimia teaching during the first semester and Rodica Albu during the second. Globally entitled *Contact Zones*, it familiarized students with the complex history of the relations between what are now the USA and Canada (first semester) and with important issues related to present-day Canada (second semester), as well as the application of such key concepts as demographic dynamics, centre vs. margin, borders vs. continua, institutional bilingualism, multiculturalism, minority languages, immigration, identity, maintenance and loss, hybridization, acculturation, assimilation, power and solidarity, stereotypes, and statistics to the Canadian space.<sup>13</sup> Each academic year at the end of the second semester, the students would present the results of their research in a mini symposium entitled *Discovering Canadianness... with the first-year students in American Studies*. In the academic year 2018-2019, the course of lectures was compressed into one semester.

Owing to the efforts of Constantin Pavel, the Center for Canadian Studies was founded in the 1990s. The center functions as a research group and as a resource center thanks to the library of about 2000 books and audio-video documents. It brings together an active multidisciplinary team (teachers, researchers, students) with both Francophone (GREQA: Research Group in Quebec and Acadian Studies) and Anglophone interests. The Center for Canadian Studies enjoyed the support of the Canadian Embassy in Romania, as well as visits of its representatives in Iași.<sup>14</sup> From 2006 until 2016, Professor Corina Panaitescu headed the Center for Canadian

<sup>13</sup> Political borders vs. ethnic, cultural, and linguistic continua, as well as specific public policies and personal attitudes were discussed. Special space was allotted to discussions of the ways in which these relations are reflected in language choices and discourse strategies: in fiction and non-fiction, in official regulations, in the media, and in daily life. Immigration issues were approached from various angles: public policies, official reports on labour force dynamics, sociolinguistic consequences, racial, ethnic, and cultural hybridization, shifting identities. A special segment was devoted to the Romanian presence in Canada. One remarkable example: Ion (Jean) Țăranu, one of the founding members of the Romanian community of Val David and of ARC (Association des Roumains Canadiens), and author of writings about the Romanian presence in Canada. Țăranu's merits in the service of Canadian multiculturalism have been recognized both by the country of origin (Loyal Service Order, Commander Rank) and by the country of adoption (The Order of Canada). For a list of Romanian personalities in the USA and Canada, see Dan Fornade (2000).

<sup>14</sup> March 2006, Canadian Ambassador to Romania Franco D. Pillarella; March 2007, Counselor of the Canadian Embassy in Romania Jean Therriault; October 2008 and May 2009, Cultural Counselor of the Canadian Embassy in Romania Debra Price; November 2008, Canadian Ambassador to Romania Marta Moszczenska; February 2010, Immigration Counselor of the Canadian Embassy in Romania Claire Lord; March 2010, Canadian Ambassador to Romania Philippe Beaulne.



Studies, with Rodica Albu as deputy director. At present the center is managed by Cristina Petraș.

Throughout the years, classes for MA students and public lectures have been held in Iași by such Canadian and French personalities as Arlette Bouloumié, Patrice Brasseur, Gaëtan Brulotte, Flavia Cosma, Gilles Dorion, Brendan F.R. Edwards, Walter Epp, Marthe Faribault, Stéphanie Filion, Danielle Forget, Danielle Fournier, Zélie Guével, Maurice Lemire, Janet Paterson, Dan Schlanger, Antoine Soare, Kim Thuy, Nathalie Watteyne. For several years, Professor Konrad Gross (University of Kiel, Germany) taught a one-week intensive course in literature to complement the general course in Canadian Studies taught by Rodica Albu and Florin Irimia.

As was the case with other centers, Canadian government grants have helped Iași academics undertake research and training in Canada. Thus, in 2000, Rodica Albu was the beneficiary of an FRP grant for postdoctoral research, which enabled her to do questionnaire-based sociolinguistic quantitative research on English in Canada and to participate in the Summer Seminar in Canadian Studies (Ottawa) and in the International Systemic Functional Linguistic Congress (Toronto). Several articles and her 2006 book entitled *English in Canada. Representations of Language and Identity* were the result of her 2000 Canadian research project. Maria Pavel won two FRP grants, in 2001 and in 2007. Research undertaken during her stays in Canada resulted in the publication of the volumes *Éléments de sociolinguistique* in 2007 and *Le Canada francophone. Dynamique et diversité du français* in 2008. In 2006, Cristina Petraș participated in the ICCS International Summer Seminars in Canadian Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa and Dalhousie University in Halifax ("Looking to the Future: New Perspectives on Atlantic Canada"). In 2007, Rodica Albu benefited from the Canadian government's Faculty Enrichment Program (FEP) and participated in the second Summer Seminar of Canadian Studies, this time with a one-hour lecture on English in Canada. In 2008, as winner of Canada-Europe Award for *CEACS Diaspora Project – Oral Histories*, she piloted the interview-based research project together with Jana Javorčíková (Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, the Slovak Republic) and Milena Kostić (University of Nis, Serbia). In 2008, thanks to an FEP grant, Cristina Petraș visited the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, Moncton, in preparation for the course "Francophonie canadienne et minorités francophones" integrated in the module "Variation dans l'espace francophone". In 2009, the same type of grant allowed Corina Panaitescu to do research at the Université de Montréal and the Université Laval on "Quête identitaire et ouverture sur la diversité dans la littérature québécoise" to enrich the French-Canadian Literature course. In 2012, Cristina Petraș was the beneficiary of an FRP grant as part of the "Understanding Canada – Canadian Studies" Program, which allowed her to do research at the Université de Moncton on "Perspectives on Linguistic Change: The Case of Acadian French."

Founded in 1994 by Margareta Gyurcsik, the Francophone Studies Center at the West University of **Timișoara** has been very attractive for researchers working on topics related to Canadian literature, culture, and civilization, alongside other various Francophone issues. The center's members, who also belong to an international network of researchers, have presented the results of their research in a series of academic events dedicated to young and more experienced Canadianists alike. For instance, Ileana Neli Eiben participated in several colloquia: the 5<sup>th</sup> International

Conference of Central European Canadianists in Sofia, Bulgaria, 16-18 October 2009;<sup>15</sup> the 18<sup>th</sup> European Graduate Seminar in Canadian Studies at the University of Maribor, Slovenia, 18-19 September 2009; the international conference *Europe-Canada-Canada-Europe: Transcultural Perspectives, Perspectives transculturelles* at Karl-Franzens Universität, Graz, Austria; the 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial International Conference of CEACS at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, 20-22 September 2018.

As regards the instructional activity, in the 1990s Margareta Gyurcsik initiated a class on Francophone literatures which focused on Quebec literature and which introduced students to writers like Nicole Brossard, Anne Hébert, Jacques Godbout, Réjean Ducharme, Naïm Kattan, etc. The class is currently an elective course targeted at third-year students in French and is taught by Ioana Marcu.

Furthermore, several Canadian personalities delivered lectures at the West University of Timișoara, such as *L'écriture migrante au Québec. Enjeux identitaires* (Mariana Ionescu, Huron University, 2014), or *La traduction raisonnée: ses exigences, ses applications, ses avantages* (Jean Delisle, University of Ottawa, 2015). Moreover, meetings with Quebec writers were also organized: for example, in 2006 at the CIEF International Congress in Sinaia, as a follow-up to Ileana Neli Eiben's presentation ("Une écrivaine roumaine au Québec: Felicia Mihali"), Felicia Mihali met with readers and academia from Romania and abroad.

The international visibility of Canadianists in Timișoara has grown in time through the network they established with other researchers in the field. Their international recognition is reflected in a series of volumes, such as the ones edited by Klaus-Dieter Ertler and Gilles Dupuis. Thus, the volume *À la carte. Le roman québécois (2000-2005)* includes Margareta Gyurcsik's article "La dot de la Mère Missel de Pierre Tourangeau", while the volume *À la carte. Le roman québécois (2010-2015)* includes "Quand l'intime se donne à lire. Confession pour un ordinateur de Felicia Mihali" by Ileana Neli Eiben.

Besides a significant number of articles, some books about Quebec literature should also be mentioned here. The first volume of this kind, entitled *La neige, la même et autre. Essai sur le roman québécois contemporain* (EUV 2004), is the result of Margareta Gyurcsik's research and brings together six studies on the novel in Quebec. The second book by the same author, entitled *Gaëtan Brulotte ou la lucidité en partage* (Nota Bene 2018), was awarded the Prix de la société des écrivains francophones d'Amérique.

Established in October 2015 as an elective class addressing second-year students of the Languages and Literatures program of the Faculty of Letters, History, and Theology, the Canadian Literature class has been taught by Andreea Șerban, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, and member of CEACS since 2010. Andreea Șerban has a PhD from the West University of Timișoara, with a thesis on Margaret Atwood's novels (published as *The Call of the Wild: M/Other Nature: Wilderness in Margaret Atwood's Novels* in 2010).

From the very beginning, students have appreciated the Canadian Literature class immensely and have been eager to learn more about the literature and culture

<sup>15</sup> The CEACS triennial itinerant conferences bring together many Canadianists from the nine member countries including Romania, side by side with representatives of Canadian Studies from other associations and with authors and artists coming from Canada.

of an Anglophone country they had only tangentially known before. The class covers a full academic year and is divided into fourteen interactive lectures; it provides an introduction to Canadian literature and culture and invites students to familiarize themselves with canonical Canadian writers in English such as Margaret Atwood, Leonard Cohen, Tomson Highway, Jack Hodgins, Thomas King, Yann Martel, Susanna Moodie, Alice Munro, Sinclair Ross, etc. The main aims of the class are to raise students' awareness of Canadian literature and to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills through regular comparisons with British and American (con)texts, which they study in more depth as part of the mandatory literature curriculum. One aspect students particularly enjoy is their active involvement in the forming of the syllabus for the second semester, when they can choose some of the texts to be studied in class by voting for a novel from the shortlists provided by the teacher each month.

Dunărea de Jos University of **Galați** is another Romanian university where Canadian Studies are taught. Carmen Andrei's "initiation" into French-language Canadian studies took place during a chance meeting in Chișinău in 2005 when Pierre Morel, a visiting professor at the Free International University of Moldova at the time, invited her to his project of compiling a volume with specific studies on a subjective, but representative corpus of feminine and masculine contemporary voices, exogenous or endogenous, that are now referred to by a name that covers both linguistic and geographic choice: French-Canadian writers. She was part of this project and she immersed herself in (emerging, minority) migrant literature, rich in texts related particularly to the hyper-theme of identity before and after immigration. Thus, she contributed to *Parcours québécois* (collection published in Chișinău: Cartier, 2007, edited by Pierre Morel) with a reading of *Lettres chinoises* by Ying Chen.

In November 2008, thanks to an FEP grant, Carmen Andrei was able to study at Laval University and learn more about Quebec culture, civilization, and literature at the CRILCQ research centre, where she met such experts as Aurélien Boivin. The following year (2009) she offered an elective course (*Introduction à la littérature québécoise: assise pour une identité culturelle*) to the third-year students majoring or minor-ing in French at the Faculty of Letters. Designed for 28 hours of lectures and 14 hours of seminars, it tackles significant aspects in the literary and linguistic field and illustrates in a dynamic perspective the evolutions and tensions that exist within a "literary institution".<sup>16</sup> Over the years, this course has gradually changed configuration, its content has been renewed and enriched according to the expectations, the demands of students and academic curricula. It is currently entitled "Quebec culture, civilization, and literature" and focuses on Canadian social issues, the metamorphoses of the cultural imago, paradigm shifts in mentalities, the ecology of languages and cultures, and the evolution of contemporary literature in general.

Interest in Francophone and Canadian/Quebec studies came soon after the creation of the French section of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the Lucian Blaga University of **Sibiu**. In 1997, the Canadian Literature course was introduced into

<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, it allowed to rely on the study of a given situation to address topics that affect literature in general, and in particular its insertion in the social and political field; the issues of using a minority variant of a majority language; the relationship between identity, language, and literature; the notions of emerging literature, minority, migrant.

the program; it is an elective for students in the final year of the BA program (before and after the 3-2-3 Bologna program), taught, in turn, by Anamaria Enescu, doctoral assistant, and by Dorin Comșa, lecturer. Another course, "Introduction to the Francophone Civilization of Quebec," given by Assistant Professor Lucia Zaharescu,<sup>17</sup> was introduced in 2001 for students in the final year of the LEA and Letters BA. Currently, after the recent retirement of Lucia Zaharescu, the course is suspended. In 2007, with the accreditation of the French Literature Master Program, the course of Francophone Literatures was introduced, being taught by Dorin Comșa. A large part of this course is devoted to the presentation and study of French-speaking Canadian authors. The Master of Literature program, although still accredited, is suspended because of the lack of students.

As was the case with other Romanian researchers, grants from various institutions, especially Canadian government grants, allowed Sibiu academics to undertake research and training in Canada. For instance, in October 1999 Lucia Zaharescu visited several Canadian universities (Université de Laval, Université du Québec à Montréal, Université d'Ottawa, Institut d'Études pédagogiques de l'Ontario, and York University in Toronto) to do research in preparation for the course "Introduction à la civilisation francophone du Québec." In September-October 2006, she did research at Université de Moncton, her scholarly interest being Acadian culture and civilization. Anamaria Enescu benefited from two grants at John F. Kennedy Institute, Freie Universität Berlin in 2003 and 2010. She also was the beneficiary of a grant allowing her to do research in the Center for Canadian Studies of Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany, as part of her doctoral project *Les tropiques de la mémoire : l'identité reconstruite des images visuelles et textuelles dans les œuvres de Michel Ondaatje et Sergio Koki*. In July 2016, Dorin Comșa participated in the Summer School of Canadian Literature, held at Babes-Bolyai University with Sophie Beaulé, Professor at Saint Mary's University of Halifax, as main speaker.

With regard to projects, workshops, and extracurricular activities related to Canadian literature and culture, we should mention first of all the three lectures given by Anamaria Enescu and Dorin Comșa in Sibiu and Nice as part of the project "Bilinguisme, double-culture et littératures," conducted between 2009 and 2011 in partnership with the Sophia-Antipolis University of Nice. Reading workshops entitled *Veillées québécoises* and led by Anamaria Enescu and Dorin Comșa were organized for the students of the Faculty of Letters between 2006 and 2007. The research activities resulted in a series of articles in national and international publications: the proceedings of the departmental symposia which contain several articles devoted to the Canadian space (2009); the proceedings of the research seminar in the project-partnership between the "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu and the Sophia-Antipolis University of Nice, published by Éditions l'Harmattan (2013); the French-Speaking Canadian Literature Dossier, published by Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai (2018). Unfortunately, the current situation at "Lucian Blaga" University Sibiu changed since after the departure of Lucia Zaharescu and Anamaria Enescu, Dorin Comșa is the only Canadian Studies specialist in the French department. The course of French-language Canadian literature is still taught to students in the Letters Specialization. It provides a general overview of one of the French-language literatures.

<sup>17</sup> Author of *Le français québécois au cœur de la francophonie*.

At Ștefan cel Mare University of **Suceava**, interest in Francophone Canada dates back to the early 2000s. Professor Elena-Brândușa Steiciuc followed the example of other Romanian academics, already more engaged in this field of research, with whom she had a fruitful collaboration: Voichița Sasu of the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Maria and Constantin Pavel of the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, and Margareta Gyurcsik of the West University of Timișoara. Her research was also supported by the visit of Canadian Francophone academics to Suceava, whose conferences helped to cultivate this interest and whose subsequent advice was very useful: Maurice Lemire (2003), Danielle Forget (2006), and Gaëtan Brulotte (2015). In 2003, Professor Elena-Brândușa Steiciuc received an FEP grant, which allowed her to do a summer training course at Laval University. The research undertaken at the CRILCQ research center under the direction of Professor Maurice Lemire and with the “complicit look” of Gilles Dorion led to the publication of the volume *Pour introduire à la littérature québécoise* in 2003 (Suceava University Press). This anthology with commentaries was an aid for the Quebec Literature course that Professor Elena-Brândușa Steiciuc taught at the Faculty of Letters and Communication, BA level until 2010. At the master level, since 2010 to date she has integrated Quebec literature (Louis Hémon, Ringuet, Yves Thériault, Anne Hébert, Gabrielle Roy) within the course “Francophone Literature and Translation,” taught in the third semester of the Master Program of Theory and Practice of Translation.

Anglophone Canada in Suceava was occasionally stimulated by the lectures on English in Canada delivered by Rodica Albu in 1997-2002 as part of the course of lectures on Varieties of Present-day English she taught as visiting professor, and by Canadian visitors: writers and academics – that she and her Suceava colleagues invited to speak there.

Other contributions to teaching Canadian Studies and disseminating Canadian culture come from the University of **Pitești**, thanks to Liliana Goilan-Voiculescu, a specialist in Francophone Literature.

### 3. Important Research Projects

#### 3.1. Team Research

In 2007, the “diaspora project” was initiated in CEACS, based on an idea launched by Ana Olos a few years before, when she held the position of Vice-President of the CEACS. The diaspora project, generically entitled *Central Europe Meets Canada*, brought together researchers from eight countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia, all of which were members of the Central Association for Canadian Studies (CEACS), in an effort towards studying Canadian individuals and communities that originate in the respective countries. The project was made up of two sections: (1) a “literary” section aimed at identifying, collecting, evaluating, selecting, and anthologizing texts produced by Canadian writers who are representatives of the investigated ethnic communities; and (2) an “oral history” section based on recorded interviews with members of first-generation immigrants from the same countries. The research team for the literary section was coordinated by Vesna Lopičić (Serbia), who was also the general



coordinator, and the research team for the oral history section was coordinated by Rodica Albu (Romania). The twin volumes *Migrating Memories: Central Europe in Canada* came out in 2010.

The research concerning Romanian communities in Canada covered several important areas in Ontario and Quebec, including Ottawa. The significant date for recent Romanian immigration is December, 1989,<sup>18</sup> which separates the Communist era from the Post-Communist era and which, in most cases, accounts for the difference between exile and mere migration.

Crina Bud, the researcher in charge of Romanian Canadian literature, assisted by Monica Bottez, focused on the work of nine writers (of fiction, poetry, and literary criticism), selections from whose works are included in *Migrating Memories: Central Europe in Canada. Volume 1 – Literary Anthology* and are accompanied by an introductory study. As for the second of the twin volumes, entitled *Migrating Memories: Central Europe in Canada. Volume 2 – Oral Histories*, the data was collected through participant observation, consulting available resources, interacting with individuals and ethnic groups, and recording semi-structured interviews, over 50 transcriptions of which are included in the volume. Nine of these interviews and an introductory study (“The Romanian Diaspora in Canada: Among—and about—Romanian Canadians”) by Rodica Albu, who also did the interviewing, form the chapter devoted to Romanian migration. Forty eight further recorded interviews with Romanian Canadians that she recorded are yet to be published.

Like any institution of this kind, the Center for Canadian Studies at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași<sup>19</sup> has been serving an audience that goes well beyond academia, and strives to meet the growing need for documentation on Canadian realities. That is why the main objective of the project *Dictionary of Francophone Canada*, with Corina Dimitriu-Panaitescu from the Department of French as initiator and main coordinator, was to offer these potential readers of different educational backgrounds and interests as relevant and complete a picture of the French Canadian society from its origins to the present as possible, while viewing its place and its particularities in the context of the Canadian civilization characterized by multiculturalism. The research team also included Maria Pavel, Cristina Petraș and Dana Nica from the same department. The project was funded by a generous grant from the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, on the basis of a three-year contract (2007-2010).

The project resulted in the publication of a massive (884 pages) *Dicționar de francofonie canadiană* [Dictionary of Francophone Canada] published by Alexandru Ioan Cuza University Press in 2011. The first of its kind written in Romanian, this encyclopedic and multidisciplinary work is both a dictionary of regionalisms (Québécoisms and Acadianisms), a dictionary of Canadian Francophone personalities in the field of humanities, and of “specific terms” of a geographical, historical, ideological or cultural nature, all in a coherent and harmonious whole. Thus, the dictionary offers essential data about the Canadian identity and diversity (key figures, historical dates and events, intellectual currents and movements).

<sup>18</sup> See Alexandru Nemoianu. “Românii de pe continentul nord-american. Pagini de istorie.” *Studii româno-americane*. <https://studiiromanoamericane.wordpress.com/4/romanii-de-pe-continentul-nord-american-pagini-de-istorie/>.

<sup>19</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/site/csciasi/csc56>.

The *Dictionary of Francophone Canada* is a valuable working tool for students and researchers as well as a reliable and effective information support for Romanians both in Romania and in Canada (the Romanian diaspora). The four coordinators of the dictionary (Corina Dimitriu-Panaitescu, Maria Pavel, Cristina Petraş, and Dana Nica) prepared and refined the dictionary entries together with 24 external collaborators from several Romanian universities<sup>20</sup> and from abroad.<sup>21</sup> The printed volume is accompanied by an e-book version on CD.

*Dicţionar de scriitori nord-americani – Dictionary of North American Writers* including authors from both the United States and Canada and coordinated by the Iaşi specialist in American literature Sorin Pîrvu proved to be a project too extensive to be completed. The first two volumes, comprising names starting with A (512 pages) and B (1060 pages), came out in 2009 and 2010, respectively. The third volume was never completed. The project is unique due to the complexity of each entry, the multidisciplinary approach, the fact that among its authors there were not only philologists, but also medical doctors, lawyers, economists or agricultural engineers; not only specialists in Anglophone or Francophone Studies, but also in Hispanic or Germanic studies; not only from Iaşi, but also from Bucharest, Galaţi, Constanţa, Suceava, Bacău, Piteşti, Cluj-Napoca, as well as from Freiburg, London, Paris, Barcelona, and New York. The Francophone chapter of the project was initially piloted for the letters A and B by Corina Panaitescu with several contributors,<sup>22</sup> and the results were published as a volume in 2007. The Anglophone team followed the same steps under the supervision of Carmen Ciobanu, and a similar volume came out in the same year.

Another important project, this time initiated by the Canadian part, was in progress from 2008 to 2010. It was supported by The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Canada and the main applicant was York University, Toronto (Agnes Whitfield). The general subject, *The Contribution of Literary Translation to Intercultural Understanding. Developing a Model for Reciprocal Exchange*, attracted co-applicants/participants from four European universities: Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic (Jovanka Sotolova); Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic (Klara Kolinska); University of Tartu, Estonia (Reet Sool); and Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (Rodica Dimitriu, professor at the English Department). Under the heading *Enhancing Intercultural Understanding between Romania and Canada Through Literary Translations: A Mutually Enriching Academic Project*, the Romanian team, which included a translation scholar, two doctoral students, and an MA student, had several objectives, among which was making a significant inventory of translations from Canadian literatures into Romanian. While they only managed to identify 12 translations of Canadian literary works during the Communist period, they counted 65 titles published in the post-Communist era. The most translated

<sup>20</sup> Anamaria Bâra, Anca-Mihaela Căileanu, Diana Ciobanu, Dorin Comşa, Marilena Drăcea-Chelsoi, Maria Drăgan, Sanda Dodan, Delia Georgescu, Liliana Goilan-Voiculescu, Ioana Grecu, Livia Iacob, Georgiana Muşat, Denisa Oprea, Ioana Petcu, Elena Popoiu, Sorin Popoiu, Elena-Brânduşa Steiciuc, Edelina-Lavinia Ştefan, Mihai Taraşi, Daniela Vlad, Alexandru Sever Vlad, Cristina Voicu.

<sup>21</sup> University of Montreal (Adina Ruiu, Suzanne Gousse) and Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova (Cristina Robu).

<sup>22</sup> A. Căileanu, S. Dodan, D. Nica, D. Oprea, D. Comşa, E. Popoiu, S. Popoiu, B. Steiciuc.

authors (until 2010) were Margaret Atwood (8 titles), Michael Ondaatje (4 titles), and Leonard Cohen (3 titles). The researchers also identified the English and French translations of Romanian literary works and their reception; 100 works judged to be 'classics' or important contemporary works of Romanian literature; 100 works judged to be 'classics' or important contemporary works in Canadian French and English literatures. The researchers also created a list of works by Romanian diaspora authors writing in English and French in Canada, as well as a bibliography of the Romanian reception of Romanian diasporic writers in Canada writing in French or English.<sup>23</sup> The extensive bibliography compiled within the project was used by Ana Magdalena Petraru in elaborating her PhD thesis and 22 articles published in Romanian and foreign academic journals. The MA student who was a member of the research team, now Dr. Oana Ursu (Surugiu), wrote her MA thesis and three articles on Leonard Cohen in translation and on feminist texts in translation. Professor Rodica Dimitriu's study on "Gabrielle Roy and Her Romanian Voice" was published in the volume edited by Agnes Whitfield in 2009, which included articles presented at the Conference in Paris (September 25-26, 2008), "Two Canadian Classics through the Intercultural Passage" by the research team and by other translation and cultural studies scholars from Canada (Universities of Guelph, Sherbrooke), USA, Taiwan, and European countries: Slovakia, Poland, Norway, Sweden, Lithuania, Germany, France.

*Canada anglofonă. Limbă și identitate* [Anglophone Canada. Language and identity], edited and co-authored by Rodica Albu, and published in 2008, was a volume very well received for its utility in different types of Canadian Studies classes. It is divided into three main sections: (1) Language and Identity, (2) Cultural Tensions/Interspersion/Convergence, and (3) Canadian Literary Mosaic – and it includes answers by an impressive number of diverse contributors to some of the most frequent questions that may arise in relation to Canada as a comparatively recently established geographical, social, political, and cultural entity. The contributors to the first part are J. K. Chambers (University of Toronto), Richard Nimi-jean (Carleton University, Ottawa), Manfred Görlach (University of Köln), Brigitte Halford (Albert-Ludwig University, Freiburg), Rodica Albu and Cristina Petraș (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași). The second part includes the contributions of the late Barbara Godard (York University, Toronto), Oana Godeanu (Spiru Haret University, București / Miami University, Ohio), Irina Perianova (University of National and World Economy, Sofia), Nathalie Cooke (McGill University, Montreal), Monica Bottez (University of Bucharest), Ana Olos (North University of Baia Mare), Judit Molnar (University of Debrecen), Eleanor Pierre (Brock University, St Catharines) and Mihai Sarbu (Sheridan College, Ontario), Joseph Pivato (Athabasca University), and Veronica Bălaj (Radio Timișoara). The Literary Mosaic is a mini-anthology of "ethnic voices" selected in collaboration with Wolfgang Hochbruck (Albert-Ludwig University of Freiburg): Aritha van Herk, George Várhey (Várhey György), Rudy Wiebe, George Elliott Clarke, Maxine Tynes, Rita Joe, Mary di Michele, Cyril Dabydeen, Flavia Cosma, Kenneth Radu, Barbara Sapergia, and Eugen Giurgiu.

<sup>23</sup> For more recent translations, also see Crina Bud's study "Les traductions en roumain de la littérature canadienne: textes, contextes et paratextes" – mentioned below.

In continuous collaboration with other Canadianists in Central Europe, Romanian researchers in Canadian Studies contributed to developing and completing several international projects related to translation. Crina Bud was in charge of the Romanian section of a CEACS project coordinated by Katalin Kürtösi in 2010-2012, and her contribution was published as the chapter *Les traductions en roumain de la littérature canadienne: textes, contextes et paratextes* in the volume *Canada in Eight Tongues/Le Canada en huit langues, Translating Canada in Central Europe/Traduire le Canada en Europe Centrale*. Monica Bottez also included her article "Romanian Translations from English-Canadian Literature" in this publication. Romanian researchers enriched the database created for the Translation Research Project with information about the translation of Canadian literary works into Romanian. A second Translation Research Project included four Romanian members. The resultant publication, *Canada Consumed. The Impact of Canadian Writing in Central Europe (1990-2017) / Le Canada à la carte. Influence des écrits canadiens en Europe centrale (1990-2017)*, appeared in September 2019. It includes three articles dealing with Romania: "English-Canadian Literature in Post-Communist Romania" (Alina-Magdalena Petraru, Iași); "Réception dans la presse roumaine des romans québécois en traduction roumaine (1990-2017)" (Ileana Neli Eiben, Timișoara); and "Two Canadian Celebrities: Alice Munro and Leonard Cohen in Romania" (Monica Bottez and Adela Catană, Bucharest).

In 2010-2012, Dragos Zetu (of the University of Iași) coordinated the research project *Canadian Literature in English: European Perspectives*. The result of the project materialized in a volume by the same name that collected contributions of thirteen researchers from seven countries (Romania, Germany, the Czech Republic, Canada, Hungary, Italy, and Ukraine). He is also the author of another book on Canadian topics, based on his PhD thesis, which was devoted to the short fiction of Alice Munro.

### 3.2. Individual Research: Focus on Doctoral Projects

The extraordinary interest for Canadian studies in Romania is also reflected in doctoral projects undertaken by young researchers in this field in Romanian, Canadian, and French universities. One of the first doctoral theses on Canadian authors that we are aware of was *Tradition and Experiment in the Post-war Canadian Novel*, defended as early as 2001 by Margareta Petruț (Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca), who was also the first translator of a novel by Margaret Atwood (*The Edible Woman*) into Romanian. A Romanian version of the thesis was published in 2005.

In 2004, Dorin Comșa, now lecturer at the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, defended his PhD thesis at Limoges University on *Identité et altérité: perspectives sur la narration et les instances narratives dans les romans de Hubert Aquin*, under the supervision of Professor Claude Filteau.

Florin Irimia completed another of the early Romanian PhD theses in Canadian literature, published in 2006 as a book entitled *The Postmodern Canadian Novel. Perspectives on Four Major Writers*. Apart from writing his own novels, he also enjoys translating, as well as writing introductory studies, book reviews, and annotations to other people's translations of Canadian fiction. Thus he translated, annotated, and prefaced *Oryx and Crake* and, together with his wife, Nicoleta Irimia, *Alias Grace* by Margaret Atwood, and commented on translations of Margaret Atwood's texts done

by Virgil Stanciu, Lidia Grădinaru, Gabriela Nedelea, Irina Negrea, and George Volceanov.<sup>24</sup>

In 2008, Denisa-Adriana Oprea, now lecturer at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, SNSPA, defended her doctoral thesis on Quebec literature at Laval University under the supervision of Aurélien Boivin. Her research was published in 2014 at L'Harmattan, Paris, under the title *Métaféminisme et postmodernisme chez les romancières québécoises contemporaines*. Monique Proulx, Monique LaRue et Marie-Claire Blais.

Also in 2008, Cristina Petraș, now associate professor, defended her doctoral thesis in international co-supervision between Alexandru Ioan Cuza Iași University (PhD supervisor Valentina Agrigoroaiei) and the University of Avignon and Pays de Vaucluse (PhD supervisor Patrice Brasseur), on variation, language contact, and linguistic change in the discourse markers from the Acadian French of southwestern Nova Scotia. The doctoral research was supported through a PhD scholarship by the Agence universitaire de la francophonie. A revised version of the thesis was published in 2016 at L'Harmattan, Paris, under the title *Contact de langues et changement linguistique en français acadien de la Nouvelle-Ecosse. Les marqueurs discursifs*.

Following her doctoral research under the supervision of Professor Georgiana Badea, Ileana Neli Eiben from West University of Timișoara defended her thesis entitled *Sur une visibilité de l'autotraducteur: Dumitru Tsepeneag et Felicia Mihali*, which was published in book form in 2017.

Romanian academics have also promoted Canadian Studies by supervising an important number of doctoral theses on significant Canadian themes. For instance, Professor Monica Bottez from the University of Bucharest supervised the following theses: Adela Cătană, *Critical Utopian Societies in Margaret Atwood's MaddAddam and Suzanne Collins's The Hunger Games* (2015); Lucia-Mihaela Grosu, *The Intercultural Dynamics of Private Lives in the Prose of Uma Parameswaran, Anita Rau Badami, and Shauna Singh Baldwin* (2012); Cristina Nicolaescu, *Representations of Gender in the Fiction of Carol Shields and Alice Munro* (2012); Catrinela Andreea Lazar, *Fluid Female Identities in the Early Works of Doris Lessing and Margaret Atwood* (2012); Andreea Raluca Topor, *Racial, Ethnic, Gender and Class Representations in Margaret Laurence's Writings* (2011); Monica Colt, *The Dynamics of Multiculturalism: The Role of the Family in the Immigrant's Adjustment to Canadian Society in Neil Bissoondath's and M.G. Vasanji's Fiction* (2011); Marilena Drăcea-Chelsoi, *Dilemmatic Identities in the Italian and Romanian Diasporic Novel of Multicultural Canada* (2011).

Three theses have already been defended under the supervision of Professor Elena-Brândușa Steiciuc from Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava: Anca Magurean (Popa), *Une triple vision de la mort dans l'œuvre d'Anne Hébert* (2011); Nicolae Bodnaru, *La culture inuit dans l'œuvre d'Yves Thériault* (2012); Ana-Maria Curelariu, *La problématique du mal dans la prose d'Anne Hébert* (2014). Two other are in progress:

<sup>24</sup> Margaret Atwood's novel *The Edible Woman*, translated into Romanian by Margareta Petruț, came out as early as 1989 under the title *O femeie obișnuită*. The translation was reissued in 2008 as *O femeie comestibilă*. Most of Margaret Atwood's important works have been translated into Romanian. Other important translated fiction writers are Michael Ondaatje, Yann Martel, Alice Munro (with five volumes, four of which were translated after she was awarded the Nobel Prize).



Alina Haidau, *La problématique de l'identité féminine chez Marie-Claire Blais*, Veronica Ilaș, *Réalité et fiction dans la prose de Gabrielle Roy*.

Other completed PhD theses in Canadian Studies at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași are: Ioana Grecu, *La conquête du personnage dans l'œuvre romanesque de Réjean Ducharme*, 2013, Eduard-Iustin Ungureanu, *Nancy Huston : au-delà du mythe personnel*, 2018 (both under the supervision of Professor Alexandru Călinescu), Mihaela-Alexandra Acatrinei, *Fonction(s) et fonctionnement du rêve dans l'œuvre romanesque d'Anne Hébert*, 2016, international co-supervision between Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași and Paris Est-Créteil University, supervisors Professor Marina Mureșanu and Professor Papa Samba Diop.

Georgeta Prada from Dunărea de Jos University of Galați is preparing her PhD thesis on *Paradigmes identitaires de l'écrivain migrant dans la littérature franco-canadienne contemporaine* under the supervision of Professor Carmen Andrei.

In Iași, under the supervision of Professor Rodica Dimitriu, Ana Magdalena Petraru defended her PhD thesis *The English Canadian Novel in Romania: Translations and Critical Studies* in 2011, which was published in book form in 2016.

In Cluj-Napoca, Professor Michaela Mudure was the supervisor of an excellent thesis by Oana-Meda Păloșanu entitled *Constructing a Hyphenated Japanese Feminine Identity in an American and Canadian Context*. Under the same supervision, two more PhD students, Monica Kosa and Andreea Bera, are currently working on the completion of their doctoral projects.

Anyone interested in the dozens of MA and BA graduation papers by Romanian students is welcome to consult the semestrial reports that can be found on the site of CEACS/AECEC.

## 4. Academic Events

Along the years, members of the Romanian Chapter of CEACS have organized several academic events. Among the major achievements of the Baia Mare Canadian Studies Center were five unconventional conferences for young Canadianists, meant, on the one hand, as a supplement to the BA and MA courses by inviting keynote speakers from other universities or important writers and artists; on the other hand, to give young Canadianists in the region the possibility to establish contacts with their colleagues from other countries and confront their knowledge and ideas. Taking into account the financial problems the students might have, the conference organizers applied for grants and they managed to obtain funding for four of the five conferences from the Canadian Embassy in Bucharest so that the participants' travel expenses, accommodation, and meals were covered. With the help of local sponsors, they also offered the participants the opportunity to socialize while visiting the region. But these conferences were just as much an opportunity for senior academics to meet and exchange expertise. The presence of the local press and television increased the visibility of the Canadian Studies Centre and the teaching programs.

So as the reader may also realize how such events, important as they are, go into bloom and then decline towards extinction if financial support is discontinued and the general orientation changes, let us insert a few more details:

1. April 4-7, 2002 – *The 1<sup>st</sup> International Unconventional Meeting of Young Canadianists*, Canadian Studies Centre/Centre D'Études Canadiennes, University of the North, Baia Mare, Romania. The author of the project and principal organizer was Horea Nașcu. The financial support for the event was offered by the Canadian Embassy, represented at the event by its first secretary, Eric Walsh. He was accompanied by Julie Sunday, a young professor from Ottawa. Other guests included an American professor from the Central European University and a former British pilot fond of the Romanian countryside. The opening of the meeting was held in the town hall conference room where the mayor welcomed the participants. As concerns the topics, Eric Walsh spoke unconventionally on Romania seen by Canadians, and Julie Sunday presented a paper on Canadian politics versus Romanian politics. Professor Liviu Cotrău moderated a panel discussion on the concept and content of Canadian Studies, while another round table was entitled *From the Village Museum to the Global Village*, organized by assistant lecturer Horea Nașcu. Among the guests were Dr. Voichița Sasu and Dr. Michaela Mudure from the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, and students from Britain.<sup>25</sup> The proceedings, edited by Dana Puiu, came out in 2003.
2. March 2-5, 2006 – *2<sup>nd</sup> International Unconventional Meeting of Young Canadianists. Virtual Canada/Le Canada Virtuel*. Grant Project: Professor Ana Olos. Organizers: Canadian intern Marie-Claude Villemure, with the help of Dr. Dana Puiu and Assistant Lecturer Horea Nașcu. Presenters from eight countries from Central Europe as well as Canada; proceedings edited by Canadian intern Marie-Claude Villemure in collaboration with Ana Olos.
3. April 15-19, 2008 – *The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Unconventional Meeting of Young Canadianists: Overseas Encounter/A Decade with Canada/Rencontre transocéanique/Une décade avec le Canada*. On the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Baia Mare CSC. Grant from the Canadian Embassy in Bucharest. Project director: Dr. Dana Puiu. Keynote speaker: Professor Monica Bottez (University of Bucharest). Among the participants, professors Irina Bădescu (Bucharest, Romania), Rodica Albu (Iași, Romania), Peter Saffko (Debrecen, Hungary), Walter Epp (Lakehead University, Canada), Michael Devine (University of Acadia, Canada), Peter Vurm (Brno, Czech Republic). The Canadian Embassy in Bucharest was represented by Jean Therriault, Counsellor. A round-table dedicated to the CEACS Diaspora Project was moderated by Professor Rodica Albu, President of the Romanian chapter of the ICCS. Another round-table, on the 400-year anniversary of the foundation of Quebec, was moderated by Ligia Marincuș, Academic Relations Officer at the Canadian Embassy.<sup>26</sup> The proceedings, published by Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, were edited by Adrian Oțoiu with the collaboration of Ana Olos.
4. April 8-19, 2010 – *The 4<sup>th</sup> International Unconventional Meeting of Young Canadianists: Metafictional Canada/Le Canada métafictionnel*. Grant from the Canadian Embassy in Bucharest. Project director: Dr. Dana Puiu. Scholar in residence Dr. Brendan

<sup>25</sup> 2003 – A Canadian Studies section was added to the university conference, organized by Canadian Studies intern Theresa Way-Lun Ho, with guests from Austria and Poland.

<sup>26</sup> May 14-15, 2009 – MA students' conference "Canada seen by.../Le Canada vu par"; organizer: Dr. Adrian Oțoiu; 20 papers presented.

F. Edwards had an important contribution to the organization of the conference as well as in the selection and editing of the papers included in the conference proceedings. Canada's Ambassador in Bucharest, His Excellency Phillippe Beaulne, was present at the conference. Keynote speakers: Janet Paterson, principal of Innis College, University of Toronto, Canada, Michelle Gadpaille, University of Maribor, Slovenia, Jacques Rancourt, Paris, France, director of French-English poets festival and editor of the visual arts review *La Traductière*. Poet Joe Blades from Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada: comments about the conference in his blog. Participants: young emerging scholars from the region. The conference proceedings were edited by Brendan Edwards and Denisa Oprea (2012).

5. September 19-21, 2013 – 5<sup>th</sup> *International Unconventional Meeting of Young Canadianists: The Dynamics of Communications in Multi/inter/trans/cultural Canada/La dynamique des communications dans le Canada multiculturel*. Project: Dr. Crina Bud. Representing the Canadian Embassy in Bucharest: Stefanie McCollum and Ana Serafim. Professor Rodica Albu, CEACS Secretary. Keynote address and poetry reading: George Elliott Clarke, University of Toronto, Canada; keynote address and film show: Dan Schlanger, producer, Vancouver, Canada; film produced by Dr. Diana Manole, Toronto, Canada; conference via Skype with writer Kim Thúy, Montreal, Canada. Because of lack of funding, no conference proceedings were published.

Many Canadian Studies sections are organized as part of larger conferences (in Bucharest, Iași, Cluj-Napoca, Timișoara, Baia Mare, Pitești). For instance, since 2004, the *Journées de la francophonie* international conference held every year at the French Department of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași has included a section of Canadian Studies. Papers of francophone Canadian interest have been published under a chapter of Canadian Studies in the conference proceedings. During the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of this conference *Francophonie et curiosité(s)* (March 25-26, 2016), the session *Les chambres secrètes d'Anne Hébert* celebrated the centennial of the birth of the Quebec writer. The guests of honor were Gaëtan Brulotte (University of Louisiana at Lafayette/University of South Florida), with the lecture *L'univers du peintre canadien Jean Paul Lemieux*, and Nathalie Watteyne (Director of the Center Anne-Hébert, University of Sherbrooke), with the conference *Les œuvres complètes d'Anne Hébert: 60 ans d'écriture poétique, narrative, dramatique et essayistique*.

Among the events held in 2008 to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Quebec City, the Center for Canadian Studies of Iași organized the national conference *Regards sur le Québec: Langue, Culture and Identité*, as part of the research project *Dictionary of Francophone Canada*. A volume of proceedings has been published by Alexandru Ioan Cuza University Press (2009).

In 2009, there was a chain of academic events connected with the celebration of 90 years of Canadian-Romanian relations, as already mentioned.

Great enthusiasm was aroused by the foundation of the Students' Network within CEACS, during the CEACS Triennial Conference in Sofia, 16-18 October 2009. Romanian founding members and participants in the first meeting included Maria-Mihaela Nistor (Cluj-Napoca), Ana-Magdalena Petraru, Cristina Voicu (Iași), and Ileana Eiben (Timișoara). A newsletter of the group thrived for some time, then more or less survived, and finally disappeared... just as many other brilliant initiatives. At present, despite the dedication of the CEACS members and of a limited number of academics,

as well as the good reception on the part of the students involved, Canadian Studies subjects in Romanian universities look more and more like endangered species.

However, in July 2018, Carmen Andrei managed to organize a Canadian Studies summer school in partnership with Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (BECO), Centre de réussite universitaire in Galați, and the Embassy of Canada. The summer school *Regards sur la littérature et la culture franco-canadiennes contemporaines* offered an itinerary in Franco-Canadian culture and literature with revisiting some classics, but also showing the new trends in art, film, and literature. The main aim was to identify the contemporary cultural references known to both the general public and specialists. Intensive courses run by the excellent trainer Sophie Beaulé, professor at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, provided a panorama of the literature and of contemporary Franco-Canadian culture before and after 2000 along several axes: minority vs. majority (periphery vs. center); West, Ontario, Acadie, Quebec; linguistic and political aspects; popular literatures, youth literature, Canadian comics; space (city, region, continentality, world); the self in motion (the facets of the self: mobility of life, autofiction); the filiation.

## 5. Instead of Conclusions

The authors of this article are aware there is much more to present and discuss with respect to the multiple ties that connect the two countries, even within the scope of academic relations only. Apart from the more familiar field of humanities the authors have focused on, there are relevant aspects in other areas of interest. One such example is the important connection between the geography section of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University and their partners at the University of Laval. Worth mentioning is the teaching of Professor Daniel Scrădeanu (from the Department of Geological Engineering of the University of Bucharest) at the Technical University of Bucharest and his two Canada-related courses of lectures, as well as his visits to other universities.

There are also various instances of economic and scientific cooperation between representatives of the two countries—at the institutional and individual levels—some of which are taking shape in the context of globalization. Others represent personal initiatives with long-shot effects. An outstanding example of the latter type is that of Iolanda Boți, who created a bridge between the two countries by being a lawyer in both and by contributing to the import of ideas from Quebec for the new Romanian Civil Code.

Another case that is worth mentioning, at least at an anecdotal level, is that of former Canadian Ambassador to Bucharest Gilles Duguay, author of three books devoted to the legendary Joe Boyle, his role in the course of events in this part of the continent during the First World War, and his special relationship with Queen Marie of Romania. For a synthetic presentation, one can read Crina Bud's article "Negotiating Romania's Destiny during the First World War: An analysis of Joe Boyle's Diplomatic Strategies" (2017) accessible online.

Speaking of Canada-related articles, the authors regret that, due to limited time and space, dozens of articles produced by Romanian Canadianists and published in many academic reviews and cultural magazines in Romania and abroad have simply been

left out here.<sup>27</sup> However, the interested reader can find most of their titles and publication details in the semestrial reports of the Romanian chapter of CEACS.<sup>28</sup> Some of the best articles were included in the issues of the CEACS academic journal *Central European Journal of Canadian Studies* available online.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> A meta-analysis of commonly addressed areas and of the conclusive remarks may be the topic for another study.

<sup>28</sup> See <http://www.cecansstud.cz/index.php/en/documents/country-reports>.

<sup>29</sup> See <http://www.cecansstud.cz/index.php/en/publications-2>.



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