

In Memoriam

IORGU IORDAN (1888–1986)

Iorgu Iordan was born in Tecuci—a small town in the eastern part of Romania—over a century ago, on September 29 (Old Style October 11), 1888. He graduated from Jassy University in modern philology in 1911 and in law in 1912 and took his Ph.D. at the same university center in 1919. Periods varying in length were spent in the years that followed at other European universities: Bonn, Berlin, and Paris. Study travels to Italy and to Spain enriched his academic experience. After several years as a high school teacher (1911–26), he was appointed professor at Jassy University in 1927. In 1946 he continued his teaching career at the University of Bucharest.

Interested equally in teaching and research activities, Iordan soon became a prominent scientific personality. He was elected corresponding member of the Romanian Academy in 1934 and awarded full membership in 1945. Six foreign academies also elected him corresponding member (Leipzig, Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Mexico City, and Madrid).

In the years 1949–52 and 1958–70, as director of the Institute of Linguistics in Bucharest, Iordan encouraged broad research in various directions: the synchronic and diachronic study of the Romanian language, Romance linguistics, classical studies, Slavic studies, Germanic studies, lexicology and lexicography, and—last but not least—the study of names.

Iorgu Iordan was editor-in-chief of a number of scientific journals of linguistics and philology: *Buletinul Institutului de Filologie Română 'Alexandru Philippide'* (1934–48), *Studii și cercetări lingvistice* (1951–53), *Revue (roumaine) de linguistique* (1956–63), *Revista de filologie romanică și germanică* (1957–64), *Limba română* (1958–82), and *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique Romane* (1964–83).

His presence in the field of onomastic studies, illustrated by over forty contributions, began in 1920 when he published in the journal *Viața Românească* an article about the Romanian placename *Moldova*, and it

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continued for over sixty years: in 1983 his last work in onomastics was published, *Dicționar al numelor de familie românești*. His activity as an onomatologist is to be traced not only in autochthonous publications but also in foreign ones, such as *Zeitschrift für (Orts)Namenforschung* in 1925, 1928, and 1937; *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* in 1957; and *Onoma* in nearly every year between 1958 and 1970, as well as in the proceedings of the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Thirteenth Congresses of Onomastic Sciences.

Most of Iordan's contributions to onomastics are data-oriented works and derive from his permanent and many-sided interest in Romance linguistics—in which he was an authority of national and international reputation. Although his list of titles reveals a variety of onomastic interests, his main works in the field, with the exception of his 1983 dictionary of surnames, show a preference for toponymic studies. His major works include *Rumänische Toponomastik* (3 vols., 1924-26), *Nume de locuri românești in R. P. R.* (1952), and *Toponimia românească* (1963).

In 1958, in recognition of his contribution to onomastic studies, he was elected member of the International Committee of Onomastic Sciences.

For a more complete image of a long and fruitful scientific life one may consult the bibliographies contained in the Festschrift published in his honor in 1958, in his *Titluri și lucrări 1911-1973*, and in the congratulatory issues of *Revue roumaine de linguistique* (1968 and 1973) and *Studii și cercetări lingvistice* (1978 and 1983).

Iordan's participation in the social and political events of his time and details about his cultural activity were presented by himself in the three volumes of his *Memorii* (1976-79). Iorgu Iordan died on September 20, 1986, a few days shy of ninety-eight. Through everything that he accomplished he will long remain a presence.

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