

# A Journey through Knowledge



A Journey through Knowledge:  
Festschrift in Honour of Hortensia Pârlog

Edited by

Luminița Frențiu and Loredana Pungă

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**SCHOLARS**  

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

A Journey through Knowledge:  
Festschrift in Honour of Hortensia Pârlog,  
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Professor Hortensia Pârlog



# FOREWORD

## **A Great Lady of Romanian English Studies**

Born in Timișoara, as the daughter of a highly respected family of intellectuals (her mother was an eminent professor of Latin), Hortensia Pârlog pursued English studies at the University of Cluj-Napoca, which she completed brilliantly in 1965. In the then context of Romania's opening to the West, she attended several English summer schools in the UK and was entitled to look forward to a successful academic career. After a brief spell at the University of Iași, she finally joined the English Department at the University of Timișoara, her native town, in 1968.

Unfortunately, about the same time, there was a sudden change in the policy of the communist regime *vis à vis* intellectuals and cultural and scientific life in general and she was not spared the hardships and frustrations it brought with it, including the refusal to let her go to the United States, where she had been awarded a research grant.

Despite these difficulties, she continued with enthusiasm and relentless effort to build up her career for which she possessed all the requirements: a solid mastery of the language, a great gift for and dedication to the profession and a genuine interest in research. Having soon become the "backbone" of the Department, she patiently turned it into one of the most active centres of English studies in the country. In my capacity as director of the Romanian/English Contrastive Analysis Project, launched in 1969 with the support of the Ford Foundation, I cooperated closely with her and we co-authored two books.

The true measure of her qualities and scholarship potential came out forcefully with the fall of communism. She played an important role in opening up her Department to international cooperation and to developing links between English Departments in Eastern and Western Europe through her long service as member of the Board and Secretary of the European Society for the Study of English.

She has come to be held in high esteem unanimously. Professor Pârlog has always been 'Aba' for those close to her, or 'Doamna Pârlog' - never 'tovarășa' ('comrade') - for the others, and is rightly regarded as "a great lady" of English studies in Romania, in the tradition of another revered

lady, Professor Ana Cartianu, the former head of the English Department at the University of Bucharest.

**Dumitru Chițoran**  
(UNESCO)

\*\*\*

## **Honoring an Exceptional Scholar and Teacher**

My appointment in 1969 to the English Department of the University of Timișoara coincided felicitously with Aba Pârlog's transfer from the University of Iași to Timișoara. In subsequent years, the prestige of the English program in Timișoara increased significantly through the efforts of Aba and of a new generation of English specialists who managed to reconnect this program to the wider circuit through conferences and publications (I recall the remarkable success that the Contrastive English-Romanian project garnered in Timișoara). During the early 1980s, at a time when the very survival of the English program in Timișoara became uncertain as the political oppression of the Ceaușescu regime escalated to new heights, Aba offered us a model of intellectual resistance and professionalism. While the communist administration of the University neglected to promote her to Associate Professor, though she would have been a very deserving candidate, her excellence was recognized after 1989 when she was promoted full professor, invited to join prestigious scholarly organizations in Romania, encouraged to travel abroad to conferences and seminars, and invited to publish widely, both at home and abroad. A simple enumeration of the books she published after 1989 - from *Ghidul de pronunție a limbii engleze* (Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989; co-author Dumitru Chițoran), to *The English Noun Phrase* (Hestia, 1995), *The Sound of Sounds* (Hestia, 1995), *English Phonetics and Phonology* (ALL, 1997), *Dicționar englez-român de colocații verbale* (Polirom, 2000; co-editor Maria Teleagă), *Translating the Body* (München: Lincom, 2007; co-authored with Pia Brînzeu and Aba-Carina Pârlog) - is impressive in the sheer range of these publications. They testify to a very successful scholarly career that started back in 1984 with the standard Romanian study in English phonetics, *The Sounds of English and Romanian* (co-authored with Dumitru Chițoran and James Augerot). Aba has not hesitated to also broach subjects of popular interest such as *Language in Use: The Case of Youth Entertainment Magazines* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010; co-editor Loredana Frățilă), a collection of essays that

apply sociolinguistic tools to the discourse in popular magazines published in Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia. In addition to her exemplary scholarship, Aba Pârlog has continued to educate new generations of English specialists, both through her classroom teaching and through her work as a director of doctoral dissertations. And while I note with satisfaction the fact that Aba Pârlog has continued to publish significant works in Romania and abroad, has been invited to lecture at universities in Debrecen, Dresda, München, Udine, or Trieste, has been editing the journals *British and American Studies*, well known also in the US, and *Studii de limbi și literaturi moderne*, and has served as secretary of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE), I have to ask why the Romanian academic system is so eager to retire prematurely its best professors. In the case of a remarkable scholar and teacher like Aba Pârlog, who can still offer a lot to her students, economic justifications should not prevail over value judgments.

**Marcel Cornish-Pope**  
(Virginia Commonwealth University)

\*\*\*

## One Word

The year is 1964; or 1965? Who cares, it's half a century ago anyway; well, almost.

We are young freshmen or sophomores studying English; our English is rather poor, as we had come from high schools where Russian was a priority; so we were eager to learn.

The English Department at the University of Iași had been discontinued after the war, until 1963, so it was quite new and in need of faculty; obviously, they had to come from either Bucharest or Cluj, and along they came from both Bucharest and Cluj. And there they were; there was Jane and Augustina, Bill, and Micu, and Tudor, and Kitty; and then there were Barbara and Aba, oftentimes together, tall and good looking and smart; very smart. And they were all young and beautiful and willing to teach us and learn together with us, so on we all went, having a great time. There were also others among the teachers, but they should be best forgotten.

So it goes.

And the days and the weeks and the months went by and there we all are at the end of the winter semester, ready for our tests and exams. So

we take the test given by Aba - translation practice - and hand in our papers, and the next week she turns up with the graded papers: "I am disappointed by your paper," she tells me. Did she say "slightly disappointed"? Or was it "somewhat disappointed"? It's difficult to remember.

My English is not very good and I start turning the words in my mind: appointed, reappointed, unappointed, misappointed? So she was disappointed by my paper and appointed in the other papers? No, this doesn't work and I go to the dictionary to clear things up. And this is the beginning of my whole career, as a translator of volumes of fiction, poetry and criticism both from and into English, as a writer of books and essays and articles and as a teacher, now already retired, after almost half a century in the University of Iași; one word, from a teacher I highly respected, stuck to my mind and spurred my ambitions: "disappointed".

Years went by, we were both college professors at two universities diagonally situated across the country, we got to be friends, spent time together in Great Britain (a summer course in the 1970's with a couple of days in London and three weeks in Aberdeen - Aberdeen? - who knows and who cares), in Germany (an international seminar in the early 1990's at Mon Repos, a German castle not far from Stuttgart), met at conferences in the country and abroad, and I would always look at her and smile at the memory - so, you were disappointed, and that started me.

And here we are, dear Aba, with a word that paradoxically united us across time and space, and you are now a professor emeritus and I am a professor emeritus, and I get appointed by Luminița to write these words about that one word. Slightly appointed? Somewhat appointed?

So it goes.

Warm best,

Steve

**Steve Avădanei** (sic)  
(University of Iași)

\*\*\*

## **A Great Model: Hortensia Pârlog**

What have I learned from Hortensia Pârlog (or Aba, as we call her in private), my teacher, my colleague, and my friend?

From Aba-the-professor I have learned that good teachers are like candles - they consume themselves in their desire to light the way for others. I have also learned that you must practice what you teach, knowing that what you are is as important as what you tell your students in your lectures. When, years ago, I listened to Aba as a student myself, I always felt special: her passion for linguistics was so intense that her lessons were full of 'surprises' generated by the entangled rules of English grammar and phonetics. As a teacher, she was flexible and supportive, very strict in her demands, but with a deep sense of humor. The secret of her success lay both in the close attention she paid to what she did and in the way in which she did it: she understood that good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths performing. And Aba had always wanted to be an actress, to play the part of her life on the stage. Her destiny, however, has been to play the greatest roles in academic halls, in Romania or abroad, when invited - as one of the greatest Romanian specialists in linguistics and phonetics - to teach at the universities of Roehampton and Dresden, Munich and Lille, Alcalá and Cologne.

Aba's pleasure in teaching has been redoubled by the more scholarly joys of reading, writing, analyzing, and commenting on words, on their linguistic force to communicate, and on the beauty of their sounds. She has greatly understood that what really matters is the spirit of linguistics, a spirit that is active rather than contemplative in its search for intellectual adventures. And we must accept that only a real specialist can speak convincingly about linguistic adventures, not rare in the wonderland of words.

What have I learned from Aba, my colleague and friend? That friends affect eternity: you can never tell where their influence stops, especially when it is based on a great example of human sympathy, intellectual integrity, enthusiasm, and ability to socialize. Walking with Aba on the paths of life has been a thrilling ride through lovely moral landscapes, a challenging invitation to break free of stereotypes, and an illuminating trip, full of answers to the deepest questions of life. All this because Aba is a universe in itself: lucid, generous, and charming.

Thank you, Aba, for everything you have given me!

**Pia Brînzeu**  
(University of Timișoara)

\*\*\*

## Eleven Sentences for Aba

1. Although we (the undersigned) are husband and wife apart from being colleagues, we have never before collaborated on any text; now, however, we are happy to write this together and to use the first person plural to wish you many happy returns on the occasion of your 70th birthday.
2. We first met you what seems like a very long time ago: in the May of 1994 - our first visit to Timișoara.
3. The first of many.
4. Our eleven visits to the Timișoara conference: eleven gifts from Aba.
5. As the two of us became fixtures of the conference, we saw many changes, but one thing remained constant: Aba's kindness and generosity.
6. The grace with which she hosted the conference made her one of the reasons, treasures and pleasures we were always happy to return for, and which transformed the rest of the year into a long wait for the next reunion.
7. She is like the name she received in baptism: a constant gardener whose mere presence radiates benign warmth on all who are in her loving care.
8. At one point (it was the third or fourth conference), she solemnly (well, maybe not so solemnly: perhaps offering a bottle of țuică with her usual guileless expression) proclaimed that she was adopting us as her "family", thereby giving a name to our conviction that coming to Timișoara was like coming home.
9. For us, she has remained our May foster-mother, her presence merging with the early summer haze of Timișoara: pools of light in the old town square, mellow sunlight flickering on the Bega, and Aba's radiant smile.
10. On the occasion of our tenth visit, Aba arranged for us a commemorative waltz; it felt like a second wedding.
11. When we wish you many happy returns of this day, we are also selfishly wishing ourselves many happy returns to Timișoara, to bathe in your kindness.

**Nóra Séllei and Tamás Bényei**  
(University of Debrecen, Hungary)

\*\*\*

## Aba's European Dimension

For a long period, Aba was an ESSE Board member, and later Secretary of ESSE. Her board colleagues and friends: **Adolphe Haberer, Slávka Tomaščíková, Jacques and Annie Ramel, John Stotesbury, Fernando Galván** and **Lachland Mackenzie** recollect:

- her unfailing common-sense and reliability as Secretary of ESSE;
- her faithfulness to old ESSE friends;
- her supportive e-mails;
- her calm and quiet posture during ESSE Board meetings as against the heated discussions she held in the corridors during coffee breaks;
- her memory for details of ESSE history and personalities;
- her love of “plotting” (always for the common good, never for her own);
- her loyalty to Ado and Lachlan, and later to Fernando in the ESSE Executive;
- her quiet success in achieving her goals in their meeting without ever insisting and never losing her cool;
- her sensitivity to the *people* in ESSE as against the males’ obsession with *money* and *regulations*;
- the warmth of her welcome to the BAS Conferences;
- her girlish charm;
- the abandon with which she dances at social events;
- her detailed tales of misadventures full of humour and charm;
- her appreciation of good food and “good stuff” to go with it;
- her enthusiasm about her profession;
- the delight she takes in participating in and promoting the intellectual work of others;

They also remember that:

- she is a people person;
- she knows the difference between poor academic work and what professionals in her field should be producing;
- she has an amazing command of English, right down to the subtlest nuances, and little tolerance for colleagues who don’t share her phenomenal abilities;
- she is a quietly religious person, never one to impose her views, which are nevertheless very strongly held;

- she has an easy way of contacting and befriending people, which has paid rich dividends in laying the basis for invitations to BAS, ERASMUS exchanges, etc;
- she has been loved by everyone in her department has for her;
- she has always found the courage to overcome difficulties of all kinds, medical, professional, financial and has remained endlessly capable of humour, laughter and enjoyment.

\*\*\*

I am so glad that Aba Pârlog's birthday is honored hereby and I would like to join the stream of congratulations delivered to her. I am doing it both as a former colleague and as a steady friend. Along the two decades spent as a junior faculty in the English Department of the University of Timișoara, I benefited on countless occasions of her guidance, advice in professional and administrative matters. Although my primary field of interest was literature, Aba encouraged me to participate in several of the annual conventions of the Romanian-English Contrastive Analysis Project, which turned into remarkable opportunities to widen my scholarly scope, as well as to network with faculty from similar departments at other universities in Romania. I delighted in her wit, humor, irony, even sarcasm, and found her to be a kindred spirit. As friends, we shared the same tastes in music and books, and other forms of entertainment. After 1990, when I settled in the U.S., we managed to maintain the same friendly relations thanks to the new forms of electronic communication: we have been able to follow the developments in each other's career and life, with their bright and less sunny sides. I rejoiced whenever I got news of the publication of yet another book or article of hers, of her recognition as a prominent linguist in Romania and Europe, of the various places in Europe she had visited. As it is customary, I would like to conclude with a wish: Aba, may you enjoy lasting good health, for you will take care of the rest: unfinished and new research topics and their publication, academic advising, scholarly interaction with peers, enjoyment of new travels, and the company of friends. *La mulți ani!*

**Nicolae Harsanyi**  
(The Wolfsonian - Florida International University)

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Even if we are pursuing our professional activities 1000 miles away from each other, in recent years, we have become as close as our birth places in Romania.

We share very good memories thanks to the Erasmus exchange programme and various international conferences we both attend.

I can vividly remember the conference organised by SDAS in Maribor, Slovenia, in September 2008. We were coming back from the University, one evening, along the narrow streets that led to the hotel, exchanging views on the presentations we had listened to. Suddenly, Aba exclaimed enthusiastically: “You know, I am going to invite Michelle Gadpaille to be the keynote speaker at the BAS conference next year!” The invitation was accepted with great pleasure and she was keynote speaker at the conference in 2010.

The Conference on British and American Studies Aba has chaired for 21 years now has and will continue to be her *raison d’être*. Due to her remarkable personality, charm and diplomacy, she has managed to invite outstanding personalities as keynote speakers and assembled researchers from all over the world, from Alabama, on the Mississippi river, to Durban, on the coast of the Indian Ocean. Whoever comes to the BAS conference once is bound to return.

Long life to BAS and Aba!

**Rodica Hanga Calciu**

(University Charles - de - Gaulle, Lille 3)

\*\*\*

I first met Aba at a conference in Sofia in the nineties. The Berlin wall had come down, but Romania was not yet member of the EU. I have subsequently been her guest in Timișoara and we have met in Italy and the UK and followed the vicissitudes of the evolution of Europe. We were both struck by the extraordinary similarities between Timișoara and Trieste from the architecture to the food and by the long-standing tradition in both cities of the use of several languages as the most natural thing in the world.

Aba is a gracious and generous hostess whose mask of Austro-Hungarian formality, indeed severity, is never quite able to conceal, let alone repress, her Latin vitality and spontaneity. She is the more indulgent with regard to the effervescence of the young, though I well remember her expression of distaste on a bus in England when a youth put its feet on the seat.

Her commitment to international collaboration is all the more praiseworthy in that it takes the form of membership of committees and the organization of events and not just that of abstract declarations of support. Her interventions are clear and methodical; indeed, I have suspected that she does, in fact, disapprove, though she is far too courteous to say so, of the more impromptu approach of the present writer. Born in the middle of the second world war, exposed to and formed by the rigours of the Communist system which, perhaps, bore its finest fruits within the education system, she has experienced the last twenty years of her professional life in the greater freedom afforded by liberal democracy.

I wish her joy in retirement, in devoting herself to her studies and travels in that wider Europe which is her birthright and thank her for the lessons in dignity and optimism she has invariably imparted.

**David Snelling**  
(University of Trieste)

# CURRICULUM VITAE

Surname: **PÂRLOG**

Given names: **PROFIRA HORTENSIA**

Nationality: Romanian

## **Education:**

- Faculty of Philology, University of Cluj, English – Romanian, 1960 – 1965;
- Summer Schools of English, Great Britain: University of Reading, 1964; University of London, 1965; University of Durham, 1968;
- 1974, won a ten month scholarship to the U.S.A. to study acoustical phonetics and dialectology; not allowed to leave the country;
- Ph.D., Centre for Research in Ethnology and Dialectology, Bucharest, 1980. Title of the thesis: *Difficulties encountered by Romanian learners in the acquisition of the English consonantal system*. Supervisor: Dr Doc. Andrei Avram;
- 1991, 1993, University of Cambridge, Summer Institute in English and Applied Linguistics;
- 1992, University of Stuttgart, Stuttgart Seminar in Cultural Studies.

## **Academic exchanges:**

- 1993 (Jan.23 - February 23), U.S.A., as a guest of USIA (the United States Information Agency);
- *Visiting professor*: 1996, University of Dresden; 1998, University of Debrecen, Hungary; 1999, University of Udine and Trieste; 2011, University of Alcalá de Henares (Madrid);
- *Socrates/Erasmus programme*: 1999, 2005, University of Munich; 2000, University of Cologne; 2002, University of Surrey, Roehampton; 2004, University of Trieste; 2008, 2009, University of Lille.

## **Appointments:**

- Department of Germanic Languages, University of Iași, 1965 - 1968;
- Department of Germanic Languages, University of Timișoara:
  - 1968-1975, assistant lecturer
  - 1975-1990, assistant professor (senior lecturer)

- Department of English, University of Timișoara:
  - 1990-1995, associate professor (reader);
  - 1995- full professor;
  - 1990-1996; 2004- 2008 head of the English Department;
  - Director of Studies: MA in Translation Studies;
  - Doctoral supervisor since 1999.

**Courses taught:** English phonetics, syntax, translation.

**Research interests:** phonetics and phonology, English loan words, collocations, translation studies.

**Membership of associations:**

- European Society for the Study of English (ESSE) (ESSE Secretary, Jan. 2002 - Jan. 2008, member of the ESSE Board and chair of the ESSE bursary committee, May 1996 - May 2002);
- Romanian Society of English and American Studies (RSEAS) (chair person of the Timișoara branch, 1990-1996; president of RSEAS, May 1996 - May 2002);
- The European Shakespeare Research Association (ESRA).

**Awards:**

- Diploma of honour for the activity in the academic year 1985/86 (awarded by the Council of Rectors and the University Centre Timișoara);
- Diploma of honour for special merits in the cultural life of the Timiș county, 1996 (awarded by the Prefecture of the Timiș county);
- Diploma of honour on the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of the West, Timișoara, May 2009 (awarded by the University of Timișoara);
- Diploma of excellence for the entire didactic and scientific work carried out at the University of the West, September 2009;
- Diploma of professor *emerita*, 25 May 2011 (awarded by the University of Timișoara).

**Publications:**

1. **Books:** 10
2. **Dictionaries:** 3
3. **Textbooks:** 3
4. **Workbooks:** (all co-authored): 6
5. **Studies:** 78

## 6. Reviews: 7

### 7. Journal editor:

- *B.A.S./British and American Studies* (1996 - 2001, Timișoara, Editura Hestia; 2002 - 2011 - Timișoara, Editura Universitatii de Vest; see <http://www.litere.uvt.ro/vechi/BAS/index.htm>);
- *Studii de limbi și literaturi moderne* (1992 - 1997, Timișoara, Tipografia Universității; 1998 – 2001, Timișoara, Editura Mirton);
- *University English. Bulletin of the English Departments in Romania* (An II, Nr. 3, 4/ 1997; An III, nr. 5, 6/ 1998; An IV, nr. 7, 8/1999; An V, nr. 9,10/ 2000; An VI, nr. 11, 12/ 2001; An VII, nr. 13, 14/ 2002; An VIII, nr. 15, 16 2003; an IX, nr. 17, 2004; an X, nr. 18, 2005).

### 8. Advisory board member:

- *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, The West University, Timișoara;
- *Bucharest Working Papers in Linguistics*, University of Bucharest;
- *Caiet de semiotică*, The West University, Timișoara;
- *Gender Studies*, The West University, Timișoara;
- *Analele Universității din Timișoara. Seria Științe Filologice*, The West University, Timișoara;
- *Professional Communication and Translation Studies*, “Politehnica” University, Timișoara;
- *Journal of English Studies*, University of La Rioja;
- *Odisea*, University of Almeria;
- *EJES* (European Journal of English Studies), Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group;
- *The Central European Journal of Canadian Studies*, Masaryk University, Brno;
- *Linguaculture*, International Journal of the Iași Linguaculture Centre for (Inter)cultural and (Inter)lingual Research;
- *Oceanide*, Revista online de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Literarios de Cultura Popular, SELICUP.

**9. Translations:** poetry and short stories published in the literary magazines “Orizont”, “Meridianul Timișoara”, “Secolul 20”; books published by the Marineasa, Humanitas, Polirom, Brumar Publishing Houses (*F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ecouri din epoca jazzului*. Timișoara, Editura Marineasa, 1994; *Daniel C. Dennett, Tipuri mentale. O încercare de înțelegere a conștiinței*. București, Editura Humanitas, 1998; *Geoffrey*

*Hosking, Rusia, popor și imperiu, 1552 – 1917.* Iași, Editura Polirom, 2001 (in collaboration); *Trăilă Tiberiu Nicola, Scutier la vâmile vieții./A Shield-bearer at the border of Life.* Timișoara, Editura Brumar, 2009).

## List of Publications

### I. Books:

1. *The Sounds of English and Romanian.* Bucharest, University Press, 1984 (co-authors: Dumitru Chițoran, James Augerot).
2. *Ghid de pronunție a limbii engleze.* București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989 (co-author: Dumitru Chițoran).
3. *The Sound of Sounds.* Timișoara, Editura Hestia, 1995.
4. *The English Noun Phrase.* Timișoara, Editura Hestia, 1995.
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AUT = Analele Universității Timișoara

RECAP = Romanian-English Contrastive Analysis Project

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