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Germanos Farḥāt's Works in Manuscripts Preserved in Romanian Collections

1 Introduction

The Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest and the Library of the Academy – Cluj-Napoca Branch hold important collections of Oriental manuscripts, which include texts written in Arabic script belonging to several cultures: Arabic (Christian and Islamic), Turkish, Persian, Uyghur, and others. Although they have attracted the attention of Romanian Orientalists since the last century (Timotei Cipariu, Aurel Decei, Mihail Guboglu), the manuscripts have not been catalogued yet according to the standards of modern codicology and have not been assessed in terms of their importance for the history of the various cultures represented in these collections.

Based on the inventories of the two libraries, we have so far identified sixteen manuscripts containing Christian Arabic texts, totalling about 2,140 folios. Six of these manuscripts are preserved at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest and ten manuscripts at the Cluj-Napoca branch of this library. These manuscripts constitute the corpus of my doctoral thesis on the *Philological and Historical Evaluation of the Christian Arabic Manuscripts in Romanian Collections*, which I am preparing under the supervision of Dr Ioana Feodorov. My research also includes smaller collections of Oriental manuscripts held at the Central University Libraries of two other cities, namely, at the Batthyaneum Library in Alba-Iulia, as well as in Iași. It is possible that during my research other Christian texts in libraries and collections in Romania are identified. For example, at the State Archives of Craiova there are 38 manuscripts in Arabic script that Aurel Decei, one of the major Ottoman history scholars of Romania, researched more than fifty years ago, presenting a brief description of the entire collection. For extensive research of the Arabic manuscripts in Romania, one must start from the inventory drawn up by Nadia Anghelescu in 1993 for the second volume of the work edited by Geoffrey Roper *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*,¹ where, in addition to the collections in

1 N. Anghelescu, "Romania", in G. Roper (ed.), *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*, vol. II, London, 1993, p. 649–661.

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Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca and Craiova, the author mentioned the presence of manuscripts in Arabic script in Iași, Alba-Iulia, and Galați. All these collections of Oriental manuscripts could reveal Christian Arabic texts relevant to my research.

The Christian Arabic manuscripts that form the corpus I am surveying contain different types of texts. Some of them are liturgical texts, including the Psalter and a collection of prayers for various services. There are also three manuscripts belonging to Germanos Farḥāt, the book *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib* and a manuscript of his *Dīwān*.

The texts I am studying range in length from 30 to 750 folios and are mostly written in *naskhī* (a word derived from the Arabic verb *nasakha*, “to copy”), an Arabic calligraphic script widely used by Levantine copyists from the 11th to the 19th centuries. At first glance, these manuscripts date from the period when the provinces inhabited by Arab Christians were under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, probably no later than the mid-19th century.

The Christian Arabic manuscripts preserved at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest and the Academy Library – Cluj-Napoca Branch are of particular interest, because they remain unpublished and have not been researched by any Arabist until today. The historians who have studied them, although undoubtedly experts in other Oriental languages, such as Ottoman Turkish and Persian, were not able to describe the content of these Arabic texts in a rigorous and accurate manner.

There are only a few notes on the Oriental manuscripts in the Library of the Romanian Academy, composed by various researchers, Orientalists, and language scholars. Therefore, my doctoral thesis will include the first catalog of these manuscripts, in which I will describe them according to the current standards of research in the field. I will consider the technical aspects of the manuscripts, their content, as well as their history, mentioning the few sources where they were mentioned. In addition to my attempt to collect the descriptions of these Arabic Christian manuscripts in a catalog, an essential aspect of my work will be the analysis of the language features specific to them, taking into consideration that the linguistic variety specific to the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Ottoman provinces, a version of “Middle Arabic”, reveals well-defined features, which can also be traced in the texts that I am surveying.

2 Arabic Manuscript Collections in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca

2.1 The Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest

The Oriental manuscripts at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest (Biblioteca Academiei Române, henceforth B.A.R.) come from different sources: on the basis of royal decrees, the National Museum of Antiquities in Bucharest

ceded to the B.A.R. the largest lot of Oriental manuscripts it ever received, consisting of 119 items (in 1903 and 1909).² The presence of Christian Arabic manuscripts in the collections of the B.A.R. can also be explained by the travels of Christians attached to the Church of Antioch, many of them members of the upper clergy, to the Romanian Principalities. Thus, the metropolitan of Aleppo Athanasios Dabbās, who was twice patriarch of the Church of Antioch, printed two books in Wallachia, in Arabic and Greek: *The Liturgikon* (Snagov, 1701) and the *Horologion* (Bucharest, 1702). Then, between 1735 and 1748, while in Moldavia and Wallachia, Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch printed four books in Arabic in Iași and two in Bucharest.³ From 1746 on, the Monastery of Saint Spyridon⁴ in Bucharest became a *metochion* of the Antiochian Patriarchate and hosted a community of Syrian monks who, among other things, cast Arabic type for the new printing press there.⁵

In 1946, the historian Ion Nistor published in the *Annals of the Romanian Academy, Memoirs of the Historical Section*, a study entitled “Oriental Manuscripts in the Library of the Academy of the Romanian Republic with their Inventory”,⁶ followed by an *Inventory of Oriental Manuscripts in the Library of the Romanian Academy* drawn by the Turkish studies scholar Mihail Guboglu.⁷ The study contains some information on the languages of the Oriental manuscripts held by the B.A.R. and the transfer of their ownership.

Between 1970 and 1979, a researcher from Teheran, Mohammad Ali Sowti, studied the Oriental manuscripts at the B.A.R. and compiled the first comprehensive catalog.⁸ It includes more manuscripts than those recorded in the work of Ion Nistor and Mihail Guboglu. Sowti's inventory contains 472 Oriental manuscripts, while the catalogs of the above-mentioned authors only list 217. The inventory also includes two other collections, held at the Central University Library in Cluj and the Central State Library in Bucharest.

2 I. Nistor, “Manuscrisele orientale din Biblioteca Academiei Române cu inventarul lor”, *AARMSI*, S. III, t. XXVIII, Mem. 4, Bucharest, 1946, p. 82–83.

3 I. Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands. The East-European Connection*, Berlin/Boston, 2023, p. 133–162.

4 Today, the monastery, dating from the 17th century, is known as Sfântul Spiridon Vechi (“Saint Spyridon the Old”), in order to distinguish it from the “new” Church of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, built in the second half of the 19th century.

5 Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands*, p. 162–186.

6 Nistor, “Manuscrisele orientale din Biblioteca Academiei Române”, p. 77–92.

7 M. Guboglu, “Inventarul manuscriselor orientale din Biblioteca Academiei Române”, in *AARMSI*, S. III, t. XXVIII, Mem. 4, Bucharest, 1946, p. 93–126.

8 M. A. Sowti, *Catalogul manuscriselor persane din bibliotecile românești și informații despre manuscrisele orientale din Biblioteca Academiei Republicii Socialiste România*, Bucharest, 1976 (not published).

The catalog compiled by Mohammad Ali Sowti was never published. The one describing the collection of the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest is available for study in the Manuscripts Reading Room, in a typed version – for the Romanian part, and handwritten by Sowti – for the text in Arabic. The one in Cluj, typed in Romanian in a single copy, is available to readers on request.

Mohammad Ali Sowti's descriptions contain numerous errors and inaccuracies. He was not a specialist in the paleography of Arabic texts, nor in the codicology of manuscripts in Arabic script. He knew his mother tongue, Persian, and rudiments of Arabic, and could read any text written in the Arabic alphabet but without understanding the content well. For the Arabic manuscripts, the information given was often minimal, such as “prayer book”, without specifying whether it belonged to the Islamic or the Christian culture, what it contained, or other details.

2.2 The Romanian Academy Library, Cluj-Napoca Branch

The collection of Oriental manuscripts at the Library of the Romanian Academy – Cluj-Napoca Branch comes, for the most part, from the personal collection of Timotei Cipariu, a collection that originally belonged to the Central Library of Blaj.⁹ From 1747 on, when the Monastery of the Holy Trinity was founded in Blaj, the Basilian monks who had settled there set up a library. In the same year, a printing press started to function.¹⁰ The library began to receive donations of books and manuscripts from clergymen and laymen of Transylvania and Vienna. Library owners donated book collections to the monastery library, which obtained the status of Blaj Central Library at the beginning of the 20th century. Over time, the Basilian monks bought books and copied manuscripts from other libraries in Gotha, Vienna, and the Vatican.¹¹

In the second decade of the 19th century, the prominent scholar Timotei Cipariu, a historian, man of letters and polyglot, was active in Blaj; he was also interested in Oriental languages, particularly Arabic, as well as Hebrew, a language he taught at the city's theological college.¹² He began to study and acquire Oriental manuscripts

9 M. Guboglu, “Manuscrisele și tipăriturile Orientale în fondul ‘T. Cipariu’ al Bibliotecii Filialei din Cluj a Academiei R.P.R.”, *Limba și literatură*, S III, Bucharest, 1957, p. 147–166. For more details on Timotei Cipariu and his works, see the chapter signed by Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan in the present volume.

10 A. Bunea, *Din istoria Românilor. Episcopul Ioan Inocențiu Klein (1728–1751)*, Blaj, 2012, p. 24–26.

11 L. Ardelean, “Fond Biblioteca Centrală Cluj, Inventar 1730–1948 328 u.a.”, *Transylvanian Review*, IV, 1995, 3, p. 95–96.

12 E. Simion (ed.), *Enciclopedia literaturii române vechi*, Bucharest, 2018, p. 227–229.

to enrich the collections of the library in Blaj. In 1950, through the care of the historian David Prodan, the manuscripts, books and documents from the collections of the Central Library of Blaj that had survived were transferred to the Library of the Academy in Cluj, hosted in the building of the Central University Library.

Among the most interesting Christian Arabic manuscripts in these two Romanian public-access libraries are the works of Gabriel Farḥāt, the Maronite bishop Germanos of Aleppo.

3 Gabriel Farḥāt

3.1 Biographical data

Germanos Farḥāt was a poet, a scholar, a writer, and a translator, bishop of the Maronite eparchy of Aleppo (1725–1732), and one of the founders of the Aleppo Maronite Order, called the Lebanese Maronite Order after 1706.

Jibrā'īl ibn Farḥāt ibn Maṭar al-Ḥaṣrūnī was later known as Germanos Farḥāt, after he was consecrated bishop of the Maronites of Aleppo. The origin of the Maṭar family is the village of Ḥaṣrūn, Bsharri district, in northern Lebanon, where this family was active in trade. They later moved to Aleppo, where they settled for good.¹³

Jibrā'īl was born in Aleppo in the year 1670. His family's financial circumstances allowed him to study in Aleppo schools. From a young age, he learned the Syriac and Arabic languages and literatures, and later he studied Latin and Italian. Jibrā'īl Farḥāt, together with 'Abdallāh Qar'alī (one of the organizers of the Maronite monastic order), had the same teacher, Buṭrus al-Tūlāwī, a Maronite theologian and philosopher. Also, to acquire a good knowledge of Arabic, they studied with the grammarian Sulaymān al-Naḥwī from Aleppo. From the teacher Ya'qūb al-Dibsi of Tripoli, Farḥāt received lessons on writing, rhetoric, and poetry. At the age of nineteen, he studied theology, philosophy, logic, rhetoric, and natural sciences.¹⁴

At the age of twenty-five, his inclination for the ascetic life began to show. Therefore, following his Aleppo companions 'Abdallāh Qar'alī, Gibrā'īl Ḥawwā, Yūsuf al-Batn, and some others who had left before him, he went and joined the

¹³ N. Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt: ḥayātu-hu wa-āthāru-hu*, Jounie, 1998, p. 27–28.

¹⁴ G. Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīḥī 'inda al-mawārina*, vol. VII, ed. by H. Ibrahim, M. Nathan, R. el Gemayel, Beirut, 2022, p. 265.

monastic life in Lebanon, where Maronite monasteries could be found in large numbers.¹⁵

At the end of 1695, Farḥāt came to the Monastery of Saint Moura in Ehden to become a monk of the Aleppo Maronite Order. In 1697, Farḥāt became a priest and, shortly after, the abbot of the Monastery of Saint Moura. In the same year, ‘Abdallāh Qar’alī, along with Farḥāt and other monks, established a general law for Maronite monasticism, based on the regulations of Western and Eastern monastic communities.¹⁶ Although the Maronite Patriarch Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī approved it in 1700, certain Maronite monasteries objected to it. As a result of this dispute, Farḥāt had to leave the monastery of Ehden and went to reside at the Monastery of Saint Joseph in Zgharta, near Tripoli, where he preached and taught the people of that region. During that period, he encountered Jesuit monks. Some researchers, such as Georg Graf, believe that Farḥāt intended to join the Jesuit Order, but he changed his mind after the reorganization of the Maronite monastic order by ‘Abdallāh Qar’alī and other monks. Farḥāt also contributed to the improvement of Maronite monasticism at their side.¹⁷

In 1711, ‘Abdallāh Qar’alī, the General Superior of the Lebanese Maronite Order, sent Farḥāt to Rome to resolve the dispute of this Order with its former leader, Jibrā’īl Ḥawwā, and the Maronite monks who resided in Rome. From there, he continued his travels to Spain, where he studied manuscripts preserved there.¹⁸

In 1712, Farḥāt returned to Lebanon and went to the Monastery of Elisha the Prophet in the Qadisha Valley, where he wrote some of his works. Before becoming bishop of the city of Aleppo, he visited the city with the purpose of preaching.¹⁹ Between 1716 and 1724, Farḥāt was the General Superior of the Lebanese Maronite Order, after the former superior, ‘Abdallāh Qar’alī, became Maronite bishop of Beirut.

In 1725, the Maronite Patriarch Ya‘qūb ‘Awāḍ ordained Gabriel Farḥāt bishop of Aleppo, on which occasion he took the name Germanos. He remained bishop until his death (1732) and was one of the church leaders who resided in the city.²⁰ Bishop Germanos went to great lengths to improve the condition of the parish and control the chaos caused by his predecessor, the bishop Jibrā’īl Ḥawwā, between the parishioners and the authorities. He set laws for bishops to be more disciplined

15 Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 33–35.

16 E. al-Duwayhī, *Tārīkh al-ṭā’ifa al-mārūniyya*, ed. R. al-Shartūnī, Beirut, 1860, p. 267–268.

17 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī al-masīhī*, p. 265.

18 J. Manash, “al-Mustaṭrafāt wa-l-mustaṭrafāt fī ḥayāt al-sayyid Jirmānūs Farḥāt”, *al-Mashriq*, 3, 1904, p. 106–107.

19 Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 37–38.

20 Manash, “al-Mustaṭrafāt wa-l-mustaṭrafāt”, p. 108–111.

and issued advice and guidance in dealing with the parishes and the surrounding community. He also set regulations for priests and deacons.

He renovated the Maronite school to accommodate a larger number of students, and it became a prestigious educational center where students from various Christian communities of Aleppo came to advance their education. He also established an academic center with scholars from Aleppo, the priests Buṭrus al-Tūlāwī, Yūsuf al-Bānī, 'Abd al-Masīḥ Labyān, the poet priest 'Aṭallāh Zandah, and others, all interested in writing books and translating and copying manuscripts. Among their works, we should mention several liturgical texts that they translated from Syriac into Arabic. Farḥāt revised them, arranged them, and created indexes.²¹

Farḥāt founded a library at the Bishopric, where he collected books and manuscripts in Syriac, Arabic, and other languages. Most of them were religious and philological works, but books on history and literature could be found there as well.

Bishop Germanos Farḥāt of Aleppo died in 1732 at the age of 61 years, leaving behind a rich heritage, including a large collection of books, translated texts in manuscript form, and contributions to other books, in addition to his ascetic, pastoral, and educational works.

3.2 Farḥāt's Major Works

Germanos Farḥāt's works belong to four domains: language, poetry, history, and theology. Among them are original works, translations, and philologically revised texts. The total number of Farḥāt's works amounts to 78 titles, whereas 25 were published.²²

3.2.1 Works on language

Farḥāt produced several authoritative books on Arabic grammar, writing and rhetoric, for use in Christian schools. These books were initially copied by hand and circulated as manuscripts before they were printed in Lebanon and other Arab countries, as well as in Europe. Three of Farḥāt's works on Arabic grammar and two works on academic writing and rhetoric are most famous.

²¹ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīḥī*, p. 266–267.

²² Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 57–111; Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīḥī*, p. 268–302.

1. *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib (Discussion of [Grammatical] Issues)*²³ is a book for Arabic-speaking students in Christian schools, modelled on the grammar books written by Muslims in the time of Farḥāt or before him. The Maronite bishop used texts from the Bible as examples of grammar topics, just as Muslims used Qur'ān verses for the same purpose. This work was printed several times, and notes were added to some editions. The first edition was printed in 1836 in Malta by the American Press.²⁴ The last edition was printed in a different version, under the form of questions and answers. The book is entitled *Al-ajwiba al-jaliya fi al-uṣūl al-naḥwīya*.²⁵
2. *Iḥkām bāb al-i'rāb 'an lughat al-a'rāb (Accuracy of Expression in the Language of the Arabs)* is an Arabic dictionary in which Farḥāt presented a grammatical classification of the words and added Christian terms. It was first printed in 1849 in Marseille.²⁶
3. *Al-faṣl al-ma'qūd fi 'awāmil al-i'rāb (The Well-Knitted Chapter on Grammatical Cases)* is a grammar book for teaching the Arabic language. It was published as an appendix to the previously mentioned book.²⁷
4. *Bulūgh al-'arab fi 'ilm al-adab wa-kitāb al-manṭiq (Reaching the Goal in Learning [Arabic] Literature and Logic)* was designed as a manual for learning rhetorical methods in prose and poetry.²⁸
5. *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fi al-wa'z (Final Comment on the [Art of] Preaching)* discusses the style of religious speech, which differs from other speech genres in terms of the language used to address the congregation and the duration of the sermon. In this work, Farḥāt relied on the Western way of preaching.²⁹

3.2.2 Works on Poetry

Farḥāt is especially famous for his poetry and religious verse. He composed many texts and collected them in two volumes, the *Dīwān* and *al-Muthallathāt al-durrīya*, while his heritage in hymnography was not collected in volumes. Farḥāt is also an

²³ The English version of most titles of Farḥāt's books is adopted from K. Brustad, "Jirmānūs Jibril Farḥāt", in J. E. Lowry, D. J. Stewart (eds.), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography: 1350–1850*, Wiesbaden, 2009, p. 242–243.

²⁴ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 60.

²⁵ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 283–284.

²⁶ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 286–287.

²⁷ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 287–288.

²⁸ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 288–289.

²⁹ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 290–291.

expert in poetry writing: he composed a handbook on rhyme and its importance for the art of poetry.

1. The *Diwān* is a collection of poems written by Farḥāt in different years and places. Because these poems were passed down through the hands of copyists, additions and deletions were made to the original texts. Consequently, Farḥāt collected all his poems in one book arranged alphabetically.³⁰
2. *Al-Muthallathāt al-durrīya (The Pearly Homographic Triplets)* is a collection of poems in the form of triangle poetry, which contains in each line of poetry one word with three meanings, to give a tripartite rhythm. This style of poetry is attributed to the well-known poet Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn al-Mustanīr, also known as Quṭrub, who was, apparently, the first to use it. Farḥāt composed these poems in 1706.³¹
3. *Risālat al-fawā'id fī fann al-'arūd (The Treatise of Useful Information on the Art of Prosody)*. In this book, Farḥāt talks about the importance of rhyme and meter in poetry. The printed version, published in Beirut in 1894, received a different title: *Risāla fī 'ilm al-qāfiya fī kitāb dīwān al-muṭrān jirmānūs Farḥāt (A Treatise on the Science of Rhyme in the Diwān of the Bishop Germanos Farḥāt)*.³²
4. *Muwashshah fī qalb al-Aqdas (An Ode to the Most Sacred Heart [of Jesus])* is a lyrical poem. It was published by Louis Cheikho in *al-Mashriq*, 16, 1913, p. 417–421.³³
5. *Qaṣā'id Maryam al-'Adhrā' (Poems to the Virgin Mary)* is a book of odes dedicated to the Mother of God. Louis Cheikho published excerpts from it, titled *Virgin Mary*, in *al-Mashriq*, 7, 1926, p. 424–425.

3.2.3 Works on Theology

Farḥāt's theological works are the most numerous among his compositions. They cover a wide range of topics: pastoral, ascetic, liturgical texts, and essays on Church history. Farḥāt's motivation for composing these works came from his wish to defend the Catholic doctrine and reorganize parishes and monasteries, as well as to guide the clergy and teach people the Church dogmas.

Also, aware of the lack of religious books for Arabic speakers, Farḥāt considered it his duty to write books to satisfy this need, in addition to achieving translations and revising works already translated into Arabic.

³⁰ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 66.

³¹ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 67.

³² Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 69.

³³ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 70.

3.2.3.1 Pastoral Works

1. *Al-irshādāt al-waṭīda ilā manhaj al-‘ibāda al-akīda* (*The Book of Steady Guidance to a Certain Knowledge of Worship*) contains questions and answers for worship guidance.
2. *Qawānīn al-ruhbān al-lubnānīyīn* (*Rules for Lebanese Monks*).
3. *Qawānīn al-ruhbān wa-l-rāhibāt* (*Rules for Monks and Nuns*).
4. *Qawānīn al-iklirūs fī Ḥalab* (*Rules for the Clergy of Aleppo*).
5. *Risālat al-farā‘īd wa-l-waṣāyā li-l-asāqifa wa-l-kahana wa-l-shamāmisa wa-l-‘ilmānīyīn* (*The Treatise on Inheritances and Bequests for Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and Laity*).³⁴

3.2.3.2 Ascetic and Spiritual Works

1. *Al-muḥāwarāt al-ruhbānīya* (*Monastic Dialogues*), a dialogue on the virtues and goals of ascetic life.
2. *Nizām ḥayāt li-kull al-masīḥīyīn* (*A Way of Life for All Christians*), teachings for a Christian life.
3. *Maqāl fī al-ṣalāt al-rūḥīya* (*Article on Spiritual Prayer*).
4. *Maqāl fī a’māl al-khayr* (*Article on Charitable Deeds*).
5. *Mukhtaṣar kitāb abāṭīl al-‘ālam* (*Summary of the Book ‘Contempt for the Vanities of the World’*).
6. *Mukhtaṣar sullam al-faḍā’il* (*Summary of the Book ‘The Ladder of Divine Ascent’*).
7. *Tahḍīr li-l-quddās* (*Preparation for the Mass*).³⁵
8. *Al-kamāl al-masīḥī* (*Christian Perfection*), a book about the lay people’s spiritual life. It contains excerpts from the book *The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection* by the Jesuit Alphonso Rodriguez.³⁶

3.2.3.3 Liturgical texts

2. A collection of sermons for Sundays, religious celebrations, and various occasions.
3. The service for the sanctification of water.
4. The chrismation service.
5. The service for the sanctification of church utensils.
6. An interpretation of the Divine Liturgy according to the Maronite rite.

³⁴ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī al-masīḥī*, p. 273.

³⁵ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī al-masīḥī*, p. 274.

³⁶ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-‘arabī al-masīḥī*, p. 269–271.

7. An explanation of the significance of the chronological order of prayers.
8. *Al-Sinaksār al-sharqī* (*The Eastern Synaxarion*), a synaxarion of the saints of the Maronite Church with passages from the Gospel for each day.
9. *Sinaksār al-qiddīsīn* (*Synaxarion of the Saints*), bringing together the synaxarion of the saints of the Roman Church and the Maronite Church.³⁷

3.2.3.4 Works on History

Three of Farḥāt's works deal with the history of the Maronite Church in Lebanon and Syria.

1. *Mukhtaṣar al-tārīkh al-kanā'isī* (*Brief History of the Church*), 1703, in 48 chapters.³⁸
2. *Dīwān al-bida'* (*The Record of [Heretical] Innovations*), a list of heretics' names, in alphabetical order. The author discusses about 226 personalities, their views on life, and their heresies. Among these personalities are the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Euthymios Ṣayfī, because of his disagreement with the Maronites, and the Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās, based on his reluctance to join the Catholic Church. Also mentioned is Patriarch Chrysanthos of Jerusalem, who fought the Catholic Church and wrote against it.³⁹
3. *Tārīkh al-rahbana al-lubnānīya* (*History of the Lebanese Monasticism*), a work on Maronite monasticism and the monastic establishments.⁴⁰

3.2.3.5 Translations

Germanos Farḥāt is known also for his translations from Syriac, among which the most important are a book of Church sermons, the Anaphoras (Eucharistic prayers) of the Apostles Peter, James, and John, the liturgy of the Latin Mass, and many hymnography texts of the Divine Liturgy for different occasions, such as:⁴¹

10. *Marmīyāt wa-ṣalawāt al-īṭr*, hymns chanted during the period from September 1, beginning of the Orthodox year, to the Sunday of the Commemoration of the Dead.
11. Hymns of the Divine Liturgy for Sundays during Christmas and Epiphany.
12. Hymns for the Christmas week.
13. Hymns for the Sundays of Lent.

37 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 275–276.

38 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 300.

39 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 300–301.

40 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 301.

41 Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 280–281.

14. Hymns from Pascha until the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul.
15. Hymns for the feast of Saint Simeon the Stylite.
16. Hymns for the feasts of various saints.
17. Hymns of the Divine Liturgy for various occasions.
18. *Ḥassāyāt min al-shaḥīma al-mārūniya*, Maronite hymns for daily prayers.

3.2.4 Language revisions

One of the main events in Farḥāt's scholarly life was his collaboration with Athanasios Dabbās, who was twice patriarch of Antioch, as well as a writer and a preacher. He printed in Wallachia and Aleppo liturgical and spiritual books and translated theological texts from Greek into Arabic.⁴²

Nihād Razūq mentions that Athanasios Dabbās, after returning to the patriarchal throne in 1720, invited Farḥāt to Aleppo to revise the translation of the book *al-Durr al-muntakhab*, containing texts written by John Chrysostom, which Dabbās had supposedly translated into Arabic. Additionally, it is mentioned that Farḥāt corrected another book translated by Dabbās, *The Nicene Council*.⁴³ Farḥāt also revised the Arabic version of Dimitrie Cantemir's *Divan* translated by Dabbās from the Greek text of the volume printed at Iași in 1698.⁴⁴

Farḥāt helped Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī, the patriarch of the Maronite Church, in writing a history of the Maronite community (*Tārīkh al-ṭā'ifa al-mārūniya*), revising the text philologically.⁴⁵ He also contributed to the completion of *The Series of the Maronite Patriarchs* by al-Duwayhī.

⁴² See Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands*, p. 255–265.

⁴³ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 105.

⁴⁴ See Dimitrie Cantemir, *Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*, Arabic edition and English translation I. Feodorov, with the contribution of Y. Petrova, Leiden/Boston, 2016.

⁴⁵ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 68–69.

4 Germanos Farḥāt's Works in Manuscripts Preserved in Romania

4.1 Manuscripts in the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest

4.1.1 MS Or. 97, the *Dīwān*

The collection of poetry – the *Dīwān* – is a book containing poems written by Farḥāt on various occasions, including religious verse, as well as panegyric or scornful poems about people and events that occurred during his time. Farḥāt wrote these poems in different years. He composed some of them in Aleppo, others, when he was in Rome, in the Monastery of Khinshāra, and in other locations. He collected these poems in one book, known as the *Dīwān*, and arranged the texts alphabetically. The reason for collecting his poems in this orderly way was his discovery of the fact that copyists were altering his texts.

In the manuscript at the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest, neither the name of the copyist is mentioned, nor the place or the year when the copy was written. Farḥāt mentioned in his text the year when he wrote each poem, the place that he was in, and the poetic meter. In the copy in Bucharest, some poems are wrongly dated, such as the year 1664, six years before Farḥāt's birth.

The manuscript contains 100 poems. The text has neither an introduction nor a colophon, or an index. It includes only a *basmala*⁴⁶ at the beginning of the text (Fig. 1), and at the end a *ḥamdala*⁴⁷ for having completed the writing of the text. In the printed edition of the *Dīwān*, there is an introduction attributed to Farḥāt when he was a monk, explaining the system of rhyme in Arabic poetry and stating that he adopted the arrangement of his collections alphabetically according to the rhyme. This was in the year 1720.⁴⁸

The copy amounts to 139 folios. The text of the manuscript is copied in Classical Arabic, in *naskhī* calligraphy. It is written in black ink, and the titles are in red ink. The text size is 220 x 160 mm.

⁴⁶ *Basmala* is a short formula like a prayer to receive the blessing for beginning a work. Both Eastern Christians and Muslims used it at the onset of their works. The Christian *basmala* is usually: "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God".

⁴⁷ *Ḥamdala* is a brief prayer of thanksgiving for the completed work, usually written on the last line of text before the colophon. It was used by both Christians and Muslims. The name of this term comes from the word *al-ḥamdu li-llāh*, which comes at the beginning of this phrase.

⁴⁸ S. al-Shartūnī, *Dīwān al-sayyid Jirmānūs Farḥāt, muṭrān al-umma al-mārūniya fī madīnat Ḥalab*, Beirut, 1894, p. 5–6, 13.

4.2 Manuscripts in the Romanian Academy Library, Cluj-Napoca Branch

The collection of Oriental manuscripts at the Library of the Romanian Academy in Cluj-Napoca includes two manuscripts of Germanos Farḥāt's grammar book *Baḥth al-maṭālib*.

4.2.1 *Baḥth al-maṭālib wa-ḥaṭḥth al-ṭālib*

Farḥāt wrote a book on Arabic grammar, like those used in Islamic schools. He excerpted from the Bible the necessary examples for exercises and comments. This book was to be used in the Maronite schools. The first part was written in 1705. In 1706, Farḥāt added another section to explain the first book, a sort of summary, but this second section was not completed until 1708.⁴⁹ The original title of the book is *Baḥth al-maṭālib wa-ḥaṭḥth al-ṭālib*, or briefly *Baḥth al-maṭālib*. The meaning of the title is "Discussion of (Grammatical) Issues in the Student's Search for Knowledge". However, as we shall see, the title was altered in the printed editions to make its meaning clearer.

The book proved to be very useful, as many copies have survived: around 61 manuscript copies are known in various collections. Some surviving manuscripts are written in the hand of Germanos Farḥāt: a manuscript in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Cod. arab. 770, dated 1707), and another in the Maronite College in Rome, with the call number 203.⁵⁰

This work circulated widely and was printed several times. The first edition was published in 1836 at the American Press in Malta under a similar title: *Baḥth al-maṭālib fī 'ilm al-'arabīya*. An abridged version was published in 1841, titled *al-Ajwiba al-jalīya fī al-uṣūl al-naḥwīya*. In 1854, a new edition was printed in Beirut under the supervision of Buṭrus al-Bustānī, who commented on the text and provided additional grammatical examples. Its title is *Miṣbāḥ al-ṭālib fī baḥth al-maṭālib* (*The Student's Lamp in the Quest for Knowledge*). The Catholic Press in Beirut printed the first edition in 1865 with the original text and title, and a second edition came out in 1876.⁵¹

In 1882, the language scholar Sa'īd al-Shartūnī prepared a new version of the book with notes and the original title, published by the Catholic Press in Beirut. In 1900, Fr. Ni'matallāh Bākhūs published the book in two parts at the Lebanese Press in Ba'abda.⁵² In 1931, Fr. Ni'matallāh Bākhūs and Fr. Philippe al-Samarrānī divided

⁴⁹ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 283–284.

⁵⁰ Graf, *Tārīkh al-adab al-'arabī al-masīhī*, p. 285.

⁵¹ Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 60–61.

⁵² Razūq, *Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, p. 61–62.

the book into sections to suit the French educational system, from the primary to the secondary schools.⁵³

In the Library of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, there are two copies of the *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib*: the Oriental Manuscripts 15 and 30 (MS Or. 15 and MS Or. 30).

4.2.2 MS Or. 15, *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib wa-ḥaṭṭh al-ṭālib*

The copyist of this manuscript is the monk Ni'matallāh Jabbān of Damascus. He copied it in Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, Lebanon, in 1722. The codex was bought by the deacon Anṭuwān Yūsuf from Wādī al-Rahbana (Qadīshā).

The copy of *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib* contains an introduction by Germanos Farḥāt (Fig. 2), a warning from the author to the copyist not to alter anything in the text, an index, the three sections (on verb conjugation, noun conjugation, and grammar rules), and a summary of the *i'rāb* (classification of the grammatical endings of words).

The codex has 100 folios. The text of the manuscript is in Classical Arabic, in *naskhī* calligraphy. It was written in black ink, and the title in red ink. The paper size is 270 x 190 mm.

4.2.3 MS Or. 30, *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib fī al-naḥw wa-ghayri-hi*

The title of this manuscript means "Discussion of Grammatical Issues and Other Topics" (Fig. 3). The copyist, place, and copy date are unknown. At the end of the manuscript it is mentioned that the copy of the book was presented to the al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1829, perhaps to be evaluated by its professors.

The codex has 100 folios. The text reveals no differences from the previous copy, but the notes are different. The text of the manuscript is in Classical Arabic, in *naskhī* calligraphy. It was written in black ink, the title in red ink, and chapter numbers in blue ink. The paper size is 210 x 150 mm.

5 Sources on Farḥāt's Manuscripts Preserved in Romanian Collections

5.1 Ion Nistor and Mihail Guboglu

MS Or. 97 – the *Dīwān* – was recorded by the historian Ion Nistor and the Turkologist Mihail Guboglu in two lists of Oriental manuscripts held by the Romanian

53 B. Mas'ad, *al-Dhikrā fī ḥayāt al-muṭrān Jirmānūs Farḥāt*, Jounie, 1943, p. 110–113.

Academy Library in Bucharest. As I mentioned before, these lists were presented in one publication in the same volume.⁵⁴

Nistor classified the Oriental manuscripts according to languages; therefore, MS Or. 97 was classified as an Arabic manuscript. As for the history of the location of this manuscript, it has been the property of the Romanian Academy Library since 1903, after the Royal Decree No. 519 was issued, ordering the transfer of the manuscripts collection from the National Museum of Antiquities in Bucharest to the Romanian Academy.⁵⁵

In the second inventory, Nistor classified the Oriental manuscripts according to topics, but MS Or. 97 was not mentioned in any classification, not even among the literary and philological works. Guboglu described the manuscript as consisting of verses in Arabic and transliterated its incipit.⁵⁶

Nistor then provided a general description of the Oriental manuscripts at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest, mentioning that the type of calligraphy in Arabic manuscripts, especially for religious texts, was *naskhī*, and the manuscripts were written on Oriental paper. Guboglu, in his record, provided information on the text size and number of folios.

In another article, where he presented a general description of the Oriental manuscripts in Timotei Cipariu's collection, Guboglu mentioned both manuscripts of Farḥāt's *Baḥth al-maṭālib*, MS Or. 15 and MS Or. 30, preserved at the Romanian Academy Library in Cluj-Napoca Branch.⁵⁷ His record contains around 175 manuscripts, of which 115 are written in Arabic script. The description includes materials used in manufacturing the manuscript copy: paper, cover, calamus, and inks. The language of the Arabic manuscripts is defined as Classical and Middle Arabic. Guboglu also mentioned the topics of the texts: language, grammar, and literature.

5.2 Mohammad Ali Sowti

In his unpublished catalog of the Oriental manuscripts of the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest (1976), Mohammad Ali Sowti described MS Or. 97, Farḥāt's *Dīwān*, on p. 11–12 of Part 2. It is presented as an Arabic poetry manuscript in 144 folios, size 22 x 16 cm. Sowti indicated the date of the first poem, 1659, in Aleppo (a poem dedicated to Jesus Christ by “the Lebanese monk Gabriel”), and the last

⁵⁴ Nistor, “Manuscrisele orientale”; Guboglu, “Inventarul Manuscriselor Orientale”.

⁵⁵ Nistor, “Manuscrisele orientale”, p. 77, 82; Guboglu, “Inventarul manuscriselor orientale”, p. 109.

⁵⁶ Guboglu, “Inventarul manuscriselor orientale”, p. 110.

⁵⁷ Guboglu, *Manuscrisele și tipăriturile Orientale*, p. 147–156, 160, 163.

date of this work, a poem dated 1713, on f. 84. Also, Sowti misspelled the author's name, writing *Djebrā'il-ol* instead of *Jibrā'il*.⁵⁸

In the catalog of the Romanian Academy Library, Cluj-Napoca Branch, prepared by Sowti the same year, the author described MS Or. 15 *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib* on p. 3, as follows: the author is Gabriel ibn Farḥāt, the topic of the manuscript is Arabic grammar, the book is divided in two parts, each of them in 200 pages, and it is dated 1772. The manuscript is a copy, not the original.⁵⁹

On p. 5, Sowti briefly described MS Or. 30 as follows: the author is Gabriel Farḥāt, the title of the manuscript, *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib*, "Research on topics of Arabic grammar". He also (wrongly) states that this copy was written in Alexandria in 1829.⁶⁰ This is all the information given by Sowti about these manuscripts.

5.3 Yves Goldenberg

Farḥāt's manuscripts MS Or. 15 and MS Or. 30, like all the Oriental manuscripts in the Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy Library, once belonged to the Central Library of Blaj. The library and the Oriental Collection of Manuscripts and Rare Books, under the supervision of Timotei Cipariu, were transferred to the Romanian Academy Library in Cluj-Napoca in 1950. The philologist and Orientalist Yves Goldenberg, who taught Arabic at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures of the University of Bucharest until 1979, studied the contents of the Blaj Library, where he found in the Oriental Collection 550 items, of which 115 were Arabic manuscripts, including books on Arabic grammar, literature, history, and other topics. He also mentioned Cipariu's notebooks where he had collected notes on books and manuscripts in Arabic and other languages. He published his findings in a concise article in 1962.⁶¹

58 Sowti, *Catalogul manuscriselor persane*, Part 2, p. 11–12.

59 Sowti, *Lista manuscriselor orientale păstrate la Secția de manuscrise a Bibliotecii Filialei din Cluj a Academiei R.S.R.*, Cluj-Napoca, 1976 (not published), p. 3.

60 Sowti, *Lista manuscriselor orientale*, p. 5.

61 Y. Goldenberg, "Preocupările de arabistică ale lui Timotei Cipariu", *Analele Universității București*, 11, 1962, p. 479–480.

6 Conclusion

Germanos Farḥāt's scholarly works played an important part in the Renaissance of the Maronite Church. He was a true forerunner of the Arabic literary revival of the 19th century, in which Arab Christians were instrumental. Farḥāt's literary and grammar works continued to be used in school curricula until the beginning of the 20th century.

Farḥāt's manuscripts preserved in Romanian collections have not received the proper attention of research. These copies have only been mentioned or briefly described in the Romanian language and are not known outside Romania. The manuscripts of Farḥāt's works, as well as other Christian Arabic manuscripts preserved in Romania, deserve a more rigorous and detailed description. They represent an important part of the Christian Arabic written heritage that should be made accessible to academic circles. Our research intends to provide a thorough survey of these quasi-unknown Christian Arabic manuscripts, along with an accurate description, to reveal their philological and historical value.



Fig. 1: Germanos Farhāt, *Dīwān*, incipit, MS. Or. 97, f. 3v. Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest (by permission of the Library).

سلاسل الروح القدس الالهة واحد

كلامه الذي اصلح بكلمة الاشتمل عليه واعرب بعدد الفعالة الافعال اسلمه والمعتل
 مفعولاته المحذرة بامره من الغائص للمخله بعد براره تلك الحوام العقلية الغير للحملة
 وضايف الاستقصات بعضاً الى بعض اضافة متداخلة غير متبيلة ولا مضملة بالحق
 لانيه يسوع المسيح الجسد باقدس جلله الذي ارسله رحمة للعالمين خلاصاً
 من الجور والزلزال والتقليد للروح القدس الذي يدبر الكائنات باقدس جده العظيم
 للثاوث الالهة رب الالهة الواحد والسلطة للملئكة والاعمال بقول العبد في
 ربنا اسبوصة دينه جبريل بن فحات القدس الاله الحي الماروني الحبيب القوي
 تحت قانون الرهبان اللبانيين المتوسمين باسمه القدوس الطوبى من الكبرياء
 اقبال المستفيد من المسبح منضجاً بحومرة القواعد العويبة والاصول النجوة
 لكن بدوهم تقصير الوصع الى غاية لا سبب توجب الاضرار عن الانضباط في
 الكفان بالانكشاف جدي عند ذلك بلا غيره الاخوة جدي جنس الطبيعة
 الابوية الى احالة الحال الجبري والامر المبرم فانقذت لها يقاً نحوها بعد
 امرا لا من المطاع وسوا من يحول مع الاتباع فردت حينئذ يدك غلها
 عجزها وحكمها رمها وهداها وردها ما لها فانبتت كاشفاً عن
 العريبة ذاك القناع الذي كان سدولاً لا مباحياً لها والنشأ مولف
 نيطوي على مقامه وثلة كتب وخاتمة رجعت فيه ما تفر من القواعد
 العويبة تصديقاً ونحو في كتب معدده وانبتت ما اتبانه برفنا ونبتت
 ما هو غريب منا فلذلك لا تصدق المعروض الواقف على موضوعنا والنجو عننا

بل

اقتناء كغيره
 كلامه الذي اصلح بكلمة
 جبرائيل

الرجيل

Fig. 2: Germanos Farhāt, *Baḥṭh al-maṭālib wa-ḥaṭṭh al-ṭālib*, incipit, Ms. Or. 15, f. 3v, 1772. Romanian Academy Library, Cluj-Napoca Branch (by permission of the Library).

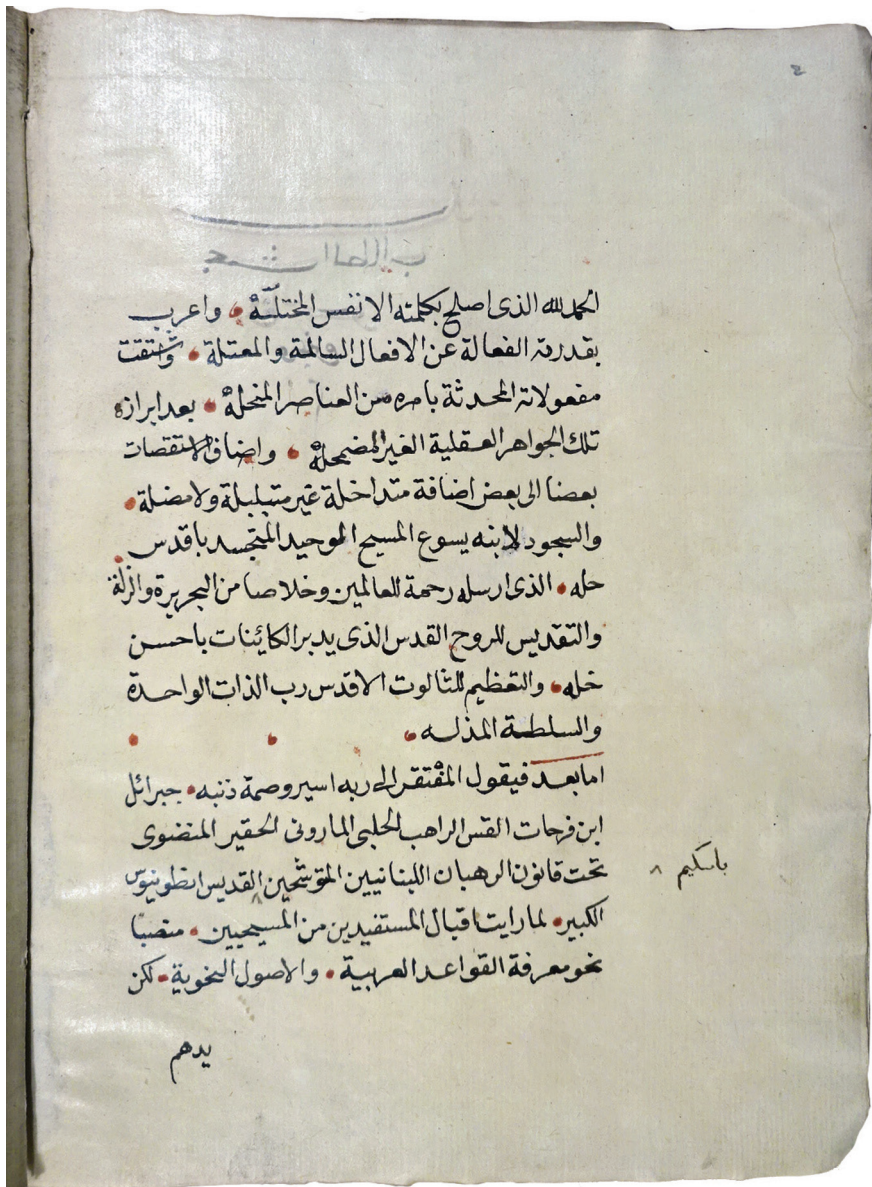


Fig. 3: Germanos Farhāt, *Baḥth al-maṭālib fī al-naḥw wa-ghayri-hi*, incipit, Ms. Or. 30, f. 3v, 1829 (?). Romanian Academy Library, Cluj-Napoca Branch (by permission of the Library).

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