

Stefano Ionescu

Transylvanian Rugs Studies

Piazza Ledro 7, Rome 00199

e-mail: stefano_ionescu@yahoo.it

mobile: 00393737559784



Stefano Ionescu was born in 1951 in Timișoara, at the border of Transylvania, graduated in Bucharest and lives in Rome since 1975.

As an independent scholar on Oriental carpets, he has dedicated almost twenty years to the study of the Anatolian rugs, starting with those which survived in Transylvania. This region continues to be the repository of the richest and best-preserved *corpus* of small Turkish carpets outside the Islamic world: nearly four hundred examples attributable to the golden period of Ottoman weaving, from the 16th to 18th cent.: 'Holbein', 'Ushak', 'Lotto', Selendi and a wealth of so-called 'Transylvanian' rugs.

In order to prove the Anatolian origin and to explain the presence of these rugs in Transylvania, Stefano Ionescu published a comprehensive study, *Antique Ottoman Rugs in Transylvania*, with the entire collection of the Black Church, together with the most important examples from the Churches and Museums inside and outside Romania. The book was awarded the Romanian Academy Prize in the History of Art, which is a very rare event in the rug literature.

As a distinct project the author is producing in Sultanhanı high quality Replicas of the originals in Transylvania, employing hand carded and hand spun wool, natural dyes and traditional technique.

This is a short list of Stefano Ionescu's activity in connection to the promotion of the Transylvanian patrimony of Anatolian rugs (further details on www.transylvanianrugs.com):

- April 2005, Rome, exhibition organised by The Romanian Embassy by the Holy See: *Anatolian Rugs in Transylvania, 16th-17th cent.* Launch of the Italian edition of the book;
- June, 2005, London: Talk at *The Robert Pinner Lectures*.
- October 2006, Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst: exhibition and the catalogue *Osmanische Teppiche in Siebenbürgen*; Paper at the Volkmann-Treffen Meeting, dedicated to the 'Transylvanian' rugs.
- April 2007, Istanbul, Sakip Sabanci Museum: exhibition *In Praise of God: Anatolian Rugs in Transylvanian Churches*, curated by Dr. Nazan Olçer and Michael Franses; contribution to the catalogue.
- May 2008, Study Tour *Discover Transylvania* with Alberto Boralevi and 20 participants.
- December, 2008, Bucharest: **Romanian Academy Award** in History of Art for the book *Antique Ottoman Rugs in Transylvania*. This is the first time that this prize goes to an independent scholar.
- June 2009, HALI, issue nr. 160, article: *The Ottoman Rugs of Bistritza*
- June 2009, Study Tour *White Nights and Great Rugs in St Petersburg*.
- July 2009, Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies, University of Exeter: session of lectures delivered by Prof. Walter Denny, Dr. John Mills, Michael Franses and Stefano Ionescu.
- October-November 2010: US Talk tour granted by ACOR: *Ottoman rugs in Transylvania and Romanian folk kilims*: 10 lectures at the major rug societies (New York, Washington, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Seattle, Los Angeles), 5 distinct topics + launch of the first edition of the *Handbook of Fakes by Tuduc*.
- ICOC 2011: **Joseph V. McMullan Award** for Scholarship and Stewardship in Islamic Rugs and Textiles for the studies, promotion and safeguarding of the Transylvanian rug patrimony. Paper presented at the Academic session: *The Lotto Rugs from Bistrita, gems of the Transylvanian heritage*.

- October 2011: *Workshops on Teodor Tuduc's rugs* at the Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto and at the Nickle Arts Museum, Calgary.
- October 2011: lecture tour granted by ACOR: *Tracing the Ottoman rugs in Transylvania*; Textile Museum of Canada (Toronto), Art Museums of Montreal, Nickle Art Museum of Calgary, ecc.
- February 2012: *Tuduc: world's most famous rug forger* lecture at the Mini-Symposium *Museum Fakes, Forgeries and the Quest for Authenticity* organised at the De Young Museum, San Francisco.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pfpWVPsJfY>
- February 2012: *Workshop on Tuduc Rugs* organised by SBARS at Peter Pap Oriental Rug Gallery, SF.
- March 2012: *Tracing the Ottoman Rugs in Transylvania*, lecture at the Turkish Cultural Foundation, Istanbul, with an introduction by Dr. Nurhan Atasoy.
- April 2012: *Discover Uzbekistan*; Study Tour to Uzbekistan: Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand.
- June 2012: *Discover Transylvania & Bukovina*; Study Tour for The Textile Museum, Washington DC.
- June 2012, HALI, issue nr. 172, article: *Bistrița's Lottos*.
- October 2012: Opening lecture at the Volkmann-Treffen: *Tuduc, world's most famous carpet forger*.
- March 2013: Exhibition and Mini-Symposium in Ankara: *Romania's Heritage of Old Anatolian Carpets*.
- June 2013: First ever HALI tour: *Hali Art & Culture Tour to Transylvania*.
- November 2013: Exhibition in Gdańsk: *Anatolian Carpets from the Brukenthal Museum*.
- November 2013: Paper at the International Conference on Armenian Carpets held in Baku.
- March 2014: *Workshop on Tuduc fakes* at the Metropolitan Museum, and speaking tour to Rug Societies in US: New York, Princeton, Washington, Chicago, Indianapolis.
- May 2014: Carpet Study Tour to Turkey organised for the Çintamani Cultural Association.
- Carpet Collector magazine 3/2014, 1/2016, 2/2016: Articles on 'Transylvanian' Rugs.
- January 2016: article on HALI, issue 186: *Compass Traveller's Tales*.
- October 2016: Talk in Istanbul and at the Volkmann-Treffen meeting.
- January 2017: article on ALIVE magazine, Istanbul, *Anatolian Rugs in Transylvania*.
- Spring 2017: Article on HALI on Transylvanian Prayer Rugs;
- June 2017: Hali Tour to Transylvania & Bukovina.
- October 2017: ICOC Baku: Talk to the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum.
- October 2017: Tour to Uzbekistan and Baku.
- November 2017: Talks to the Textile Museum Washington DC and to the Hajji Baba Club NY.
- May 2018: Textile Tour of Greece: Athens, Corfu, Crete.
- June 2018: Study Tour to Transylvania and Bukovina.

To access published articles please go to: <https://independent.academia.edu/StefanoIonescu>

MAIN PUBLICATIONS

2007 *Antique Ottoman Rugs in Transylvania*

(1st ed. 2005; 2 ed. 2007, 240 pp., English, Italian, German, Hungarian, Romanian ed.)

“I think the book is terrific. Very well done indeed. The colour printing is very good, the layout is perfect - I love all the extra pictures of interiors and the line-drawings. But most of all the quality of the text seems excellent. I first went to the appendices and found them superb, a great contribution towards the study of these carpets... “

Michael Franses

2012 *Handbook of Fakes by Tuduc* (160 pp)

The fourth edition published on the occasion of the Volkmann-Treffen meeting of Berlin.

This book became the reference work on the topic, often cited in the auction catalogues.

2013 *Anatolian Carpets from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum*

The catalogue of the Gdańsk exhibition is a tribute to the beauty of the Anatolian rugs and of the Churches in Transylvania where they survived: 196 pages, text English-Polish.

“The Gdańsk catalogue is an excellent piece of work and a genuinely beautiful book. I am very appreciative of good work.”

Jon Thompson

2018 *St Margaret's Church in Medias: the Monument and the Carpet Collection*
(160 pp., English/German)

A book dedicated to the most beautiful church housing the most interesting carpet collection in Transylvania.