

“To Promote Professional Study,
Criticism and Research on All Aspects of
Romanian Culture and Civilization”:
The Society for Romanian Studies at Forty

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The Society for Romanian Studies celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2013, making it one of the oldest and longest-lived of East European area groups.¹ Originally formed to provide what today is called “networking” between those interested in the study of Romanian culture and civilization, the SRS soon morphed into a full-fledged professional scholarly organization, with conferences, a regular newsletter and other activities designed to move Romanian studies to the next level in the United States, North America and eventually on an international basis.²

The first iteration of the SRS was as a simple Romanian Studies Group (RSG) (1973-1977). This group owed primarily to the initiative of Jim Augerot (University of Washington) and Michael Impey (University of Kentucky) whose experiences in Romania, the U.S. and the United Kingdom in the 1960s and early 1970s had led them to the realization that there was a pressing need for a professional organization dealing with Romanian Studies in the United States. It was also clear that there existed a sufficiently large critical mass of scholars — created in large part by the Fulbright and the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) programs with Romania that began in the 1960s — to make such an organization both feasible and viable.³

The initial organizational step was taken by Augerot, who called and coordinated a “Conference on Romanian Language and Literature” at the University of Washington on May 12-13, 1972. The meeting had as special guests and speakers the prominent Romanian historian Constantin C. Giurescu, who was teaching for the year at Columbia University, Dan Grigorescu, Director of the Romanian Library in New York, and Georgene Lovecky of the Fulbright Program. It was during this conference, the first of its kind in the U.S. after World War II, that conversations, public and private, led to the idea of organizing a Romanian

studies group.

The formal steps toward organizing the RSG were subsequently taken at the April 26-28, 1973, Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, where it was decided that the group would include all areas of the humanities and social sciences, not just language and literature. The aim from the start would be to promote professional study, criticism and research on all aspects of Romanian culture and civilization. Impey (Comparative Literature, University of Kentucky) and Augerot (Language and Literature, University of Washington) were elected as the first executive officers of the Charter Board (President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively), and an advisory board was established composed of Robert Austerlitz (Language and Folklore, Columbia University), Jan Harold Brundvand (Folklore, University of Utah), Charles M. Carlton (Linguistics, University of Rochester), Stephen A. Fischer-Galati (History, University of Colorado), Keith Hitchins (History, University of Illinois), Barbara Jelavich (History, Indiana University) and Eric Hamp (Linguistics, University of Chicago). Forty-one charter members joined the organization.⁴ Augerot also began publishing the first in a series of RSG newsletters. He served as Secretary-Treasurer until April 1977 and as Treasurer until September 2010.

The first RSG conference was held November 15-16, 1974 at the University of Colorado, hosted by Stephen Fischer-Galati. This was followed in the fall of 1975, on October 12-13, by the Second RSG conference/annual meeting at the University of North Carolina, hosted by Augustin Maissen. Approximately fifty were in attendance including Romanian Ambassador Corneliu Bogdan.

In 1976, Radu R.N. Florescu (History, Boston College) became President and E. Garrison Walters (History, Ohio State University) became the newsletter editor. Paul Michelson (History, Huntington College), who had been elected to the Executive Board the previous year, became secretary pro-tem in 1977. During Florescu's presidency, the third (and final) RSG conference was held at The Ohio State University in Columbus on April 6, 1977, dedicated to the "Centennial of Romanian Independence." The celebration was co-sponsored by the Romanian Academy and IREX.

The meeting was linked to the April 7-9, 1977, American Association for Southeast European Studies Symposium/Conference on Southeastern Europe at Ohio State, part of a mutually-beneficial relationship between OSU and the SRS throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Ohio State had taken the lead in the American Association for Southeast European Studies (AASES). It had also catapulted into a

leading role in Romanian Studies with the launching of the most successful ever Romanian-language program in the United States under the leadership of Rodica Boțoman in 1975. (The success of her first Romanian language course in 1974 led to the establishment in 1975 of the OSU Romanian Culture and Civilization Program which by 1977 had over 140 students. By 1980, the OSU program had over 360 students studying Romanian and Romanian civilization.)⁵

The 1977 OSU conference was a watershed for South East European Studies and for Romanian studies in the U.S. as the Romanian Academy sent a full delegation and the vast majority of American Romanianists participated. Romanian studies emerged as the largest and strongest of the participating South East European area groups, with four panels at the RSG conference and 16 panels at the Symposium-Conference (Yugoslavia had two, Bulgaria five, Greece three, Albania one, and Southeastern Europe generally 14). The program committee for the RSG was led by Radu Florescu and included R.V. Burks (Wayne State), Walter M. Bacon (University of Nebraska-Omaha), Rodica Boțoman and Paul Michelson.

At the 1977 annual business meeting on April 7, held during the OSU conference/symposium, the RSG formally emerged in its second iteration as the Society for Romanian Studies. The SRS also agreed at this meeting to become an affiliate of the American Association for Southeast European Studies (whose unfortunate acronym AASES provided so much hilarity and ribald commentary over the years that the group eventually changed its name to the South East European Studies Association or SEESA). The AASES had developed out of the American Association for South Slavic Studies and its journal, *Balkanistica* (Vol. 1 appeared in 1974) became a principal publication for the RSG/SRS.⁶

The 1978 SRS annual business meeting was also held at The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, on October 14, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS), October 12-15, 1978. Special events were again provided by the OSU Romanian Program.

Officers for 1978-1980 were elected in November 1978, with Stephen A. Fischer-Galati (History, University of Colorado) chosen as President of the SRS, Walter M. Bacon, Jr. (Political Science, University of Nebraska-Omaha) as Vice-President, Paul E. Michelson as Secretary and Newsletter Editor, and Jim Augerot as Treasurer. Michelson served as Newsletter Editor until 2007, publishing 30 volumes of the newsletter, and continued as secretary through 2015. The national meeting of the SRS was held in New Haven, CT, on October 12, 1979, as part of

the AAASS meeting, October 10-13, 1979, though no separate program was held. This was followed in 1980 with a splendid stand-alone SRS conference at Lafayette College in Easton, PA, November 8, hosted by Earl A. Pope.

Mary Ellen Fischer (Government, Skidmore College) was elected President of the SRS in 1980-1982, and Gerald J. Bobango (History, Romanian-American Heritage Center) served as Vice-President. The 1981 annual meeting was again held at The Ohio State University, Columbus OH, April 9-11, 1981. The SRS program unfolded in conjunction with the Second AASES Symposium/Conference at OSU. Once more the SRS had the most panels at the symposium with eight full sessions. A similarly sparkling annual meeting was held at Boston College, Boston MA, April 30-May 1, 1982, with a wide mix of panels, music and other activities (including celebration of the centennials of George Enescu, Nicolae Titulescu, and Vasile Pârvan) was organized by Fischer and hosted by Radu Florescu.

It was during Fischer's tenure as president that the SRS came under increasing pressure (which continued through the 1980s) from the Romanian Communist regime which was not pleased by some of the papers being presented at SRS meetings, particularly those dealing with post-1945 Romania. It is almost needless to say that Fischer (and her successor Rodica Boțoman) firmly informed the Romanian authorities that the SRS would brook no attempts to interfere with the academic freedom of conference participants to present their research findings at professional academic meetings, and that if the Romanian regime didn't like it, they didn't have to send people to participate. This made program planning a bit more dicey as delegations were promised, then withdrawn, then promised, then didn't show up. In the end, the Communist authorities realized that they were damaging themselves much more than the SRS and resumed sending people to SRS meetings. The tradition of defending the right of scholars to have their say no matter how unpopular this might be with political or cultural authorities has, I am pleased to say, continued strong down to the present.

Fischer was succeeded as President in 1982-1984 by Rodica Boțoman (Slavic and East European Languages, The Ohio State University) and Walter M. Bacon, Jr. (Political Science, University of Nebraska-Omaha) was elected Vice-President. The highlight of this period was the 1983 National Meeting, a gala event held in Kansas City, MO, on October 21-22, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the SRS. Ten panels spanning the breadth of Romanian studies were presented at this meeting and affirmed the solidity of the foundations laid by Augerot and Impey in 1973. (Perhaps exhausted by this outstanding effort, no national meeting

was held in 1984.) Discussions of the idea of holding an international congress on Romanian studies were begun with Sorin Alexandrescu of the University of Amsterdam.

Walter M. Bacon, Jr., served as President in 1985 and 1986, as the term of office was shifted to a calendar year basis. Michael Impey (Languages, University of Kentucky) was Vice-President. A stand-alone annual meeting was held at The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, April 4-6, 1985, a lively program that included Romanian food and dancing as well as eleven scholarly sessions. Rodica Boțoman hosted; her husband, George, was again the star of OSU's Haiducii Romanian dance ensemble.

The events of 1985-1986 were capped by the First International Congress on Romanian Studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, July 1-4, 1986. A joint project with the European Asociația Internațională de Studii Românești, this was the largest world gathering of Romanian Studies specialists to date. Walter M. Bacon, seconded by Rodica Boțoman and Paul Michelson for the SRS, was North American program chair; Catharine Durandin (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales) and Claude Karnoouh (Institut de Monde Soviétique, d'Europe Centrale et Orientale, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) were program chairs on the European side. Selected papers from this congress were published in the *International Journal of Rumanian Studies* (Amsterdam), edited by Sorin Alexandrescu.⁷ Several members of the SRS also joined the board of the IJRS at this time.

In 1987-1988, Earl A. Pope (Religion, Lafayette College) was President and Barbara Jelavich (History, Indiana University) was Vice-President. Another impressive stand-alone annual conference was organized at Emerson College, Boston, by George Ursul (History, Emerson College), held on November 7, 1987. The 1988 annual meeting and program were held at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE, October 21-22, 1988, excellently hosted by Walter M. Bacon. The program included a substantial number of participants from Romania.

Barbara Jelavich (History, Indiana University) succeeded to the Presidency for 1989-1990, with Katherine Verdery (Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University) as Vice-President. This, obviously, was a time of considerable turmoil and exhilaration as the Communist regime in Romania came tumbling down. The status of Romanian Studies would also change significantly and dramatically.⁸ The traditional national meeting was held in Chicago, IL, November 3, 1989, in conjunction with the AAASS, November 2-5, but with no stand-alone program.

This was followed in October 18, 1990 with a business meeting also in conjunction with the AAASS, October 18-21, accompanied by a special program at the Romanian Embassy. In 1990, through Jelavich's efforts, the SRS became an official affiliate of the American Historical Association.

In 1991, George R. Ursul (History, Emerson College) was elected President with Rodica Boțoman (Slavic and East European Languages, The Ohio State University) as Vice-President. They served from 1991 to 1993. The 1991 Annual Meeting was a separate session held in Miami, FL, November 22-25, in conjunction with the AAASS. The 1992 business meeting was at the AAASS convention in Phoenix AZ, November 19-22, 1992, though without a separate program. And, beginning in 1992, the SRS cooperated informally and fruitfully for more than a decade with the publications and conferences of the Center for Romanian Studies in Iași, which was the leading scholarly outlet for Romanian Studies between 1992 and 2002.⁹

The major preoccupation of the SRS, aside from adjusting to new conditions in Romania, became the planning and execution of the Second International Congress on Romanian Studies in Iași in summer 1993. It was decided that logistically and financially having the meeting in Romania made more sense than a previously projected meeting in the United States. The cooperation of the Romanian Academy was significant as were the contributions of the Romanian Cultural Foundation. Cornelia Bodea of the Romanian Academy and Paul Michelson were joint program chairs and Dumitru Vitcu handled local arrangements for the University of Iași and the Xenopol Institute of History. The congress, held on July 6-10, 1993, was a rousing success, particularly in introducing Romanian academics to American-style congresses, with less formality and a wide variety of panels, round tables, and social events. There were 67 academic sessions at the Iași meeting, along with a myriad of extracurricular events, a concert and other protocol events so beloved by President Ursul.

Joseph Harrington (History, Framingham State College) served as President from 1994 to 1996, and Lory Wallfisch (Music, Smith College) was Vice-President. During his term in office, the indefatigable Harrington organized or promoted more meetings and conferences than any of his predecessors or successors: a National Meeting at the Romanian Cultural Center, New York, NY, February 18-19, 1994; another scholarly meeting at the Romanian Cultural Center, New York NY, November 15-16, 1994; a business meeting in Philadelphia, PA, November 19, 1994, in conjunction with the AAASS, November 17-20;¹⁰ a first-

ever SRS Graduate Student Conference at the Romanian Cultural Center, New York, NY, April 8, 1995; a National Meeting at the Romanian Embassy, Washington D.C., October 24-25, 1995; an annual business meeting Washington, D.C., October 27, 1995 in conjunction with the AAASS, October 26-29, 1995; a first-ever SRS Conference on Business and Politics at the Romanian Embassy, Washington, D.C., April 26, 1996; an excellent stand-alone National Meeting at Boston College, Boston, MA, November 13, 1996; and the 1996 business meeting in Boston, MA, November 15, 1996 in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 14-17. 1995 was also significant in that the SRS website went live in the summer, hosted at Huntington College and edited by Paul Michelson until 2010.

The 1997-2000¹¹ Presidency of Paul Quinlan (History, Providence College) and Vice-Presidency of Grant Harris (Librarian, Library of Congress) also featured a significant number of important conferences. The 1997 Third International Congress on Romanian Studies, held in Cluj-Napoca, July 1-6, was the main achievement. The Romanian Academy again collaborated with the SRS through the work of Cornelia Bodea, Paul Michelson again was program chair, and Vasile Pușcaș and Nicolae Bocșan handled local arrangements for the Babeș-Bolyai University. There was an increased number of non-traditional disciplines represented at this meeting, that is, specializations outside of history, language and literature.

Other meetings during Quinlan's tenure were a stand-alone National Meeting at the University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 19, 1997, and a business meeting in Seattle, November 20, 1997, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 20-23; a fine 25th Anniversary SRS Conference at the Romanian Embassy and Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., March 20-21, 1998, hosted by Charles King; a National Meeting at the Romanian Cultural Center, New York, NY, April 17, 1999; an annual business meeting in St. Louis, MO, November 19, 1999, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 18-20; and an annual business session in Denver, CO, November 10, 2000, in conjunction with the AAASS, November 9-12. It became clear, however, toward the end of the 1990s, that the increasing efforts needed for the planning and execution of the international congresses meant that the days of stand-alone SRS conferences were coming to a close. A regrettable consequence of this move to larger, international conferences — as Michael Impey has pointed out — was a diminished sense of “intimacy and interaction” that had characterized SRS meetings in the 1970s and

1980s, as well as a greater degree of compartmentalism, resulting in the loss of “the ability to meet and engage professors and students from other disciplines.”¹²

The SRS also participated in several summer conferences organized by the Romanian Cultural Foundation in București which were devoted to thinking about Romanian studies from a Romanian perspective. One consequence of this was the temporary re-appearance of Sorin Alexandrescu's journal under the title, *New International Journal of Romanian Studies* (1998-2000).¹³

In 1999, under the Quinlan presidency and thanks to Steven Roper, the SRS became an affiliate of the American Political Science Association (APSA) and in 2000, the SRS began a joint-membership arrangement with the newly-refounded South East European Studies Association (SEESA) as well as becoming an affiliate organization of SEESA. The purpose of SEESA was to make sure that Southeastern Europe didn't get lost in the shuffle of changing currents in the AAASS and the potential swamping of Romanian studies interests in favor of Central European and Russian studies. Augerot and Michelson served as officers of SEESA from the start and provided strong ties between SEESA and the SRS.

Jim Augerot (Language and Literature, University of Washington), President, and Henry (Chip) Carey (Political Science, Georgia State University), Vice-President, were elected for 2001-2005. The Fourth International Congress on Romanian Studies, University of Suceava, Suceava, Romania, July 9-12, 2001, was another major event for the SRS. Attendance was about the same as at the previous two congresses, but regionalism (or, perhaps better said, “provincialism”) seemed more apparent. Participants were mostly from northeastern Romania, as Romanians seemed unwilling to travel to other regions of the country, especially if these were a little out of the way. Paul Michelson was program chair; local arrangements were well-handled by the University of Suceava (Mihai Iacobescu, Dumitry Vitcu, Ștefan Purici) and the Center for Romanian Studies in. The SRS held its annual gathering in Arlington, VA, November 16, 2001, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 15-18. A highlight of that meeting was the publication of a festschrift for Cornelia Bodea. Other annual business meetings took place at Pittsburgh, PA, November 22, 2002, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 21-24; Toronto, Canada, November 21, 2003, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 20-23; and Salt Lake City, UT, November 4, 2005, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 3-6.

From 2006 to 2009, Paul E. Michelson (History, Huntington University) served as President, and Ileana Orlich (Languages, Arizona State University) was

Vice-President; Jim Augerot took on the Secretary duties during the interim along with the Treasury. In 2007, Dan Pennell (Library, University of Pittsburgh) became Newsletter Editor. The SRS held a spring program session at the Romanian Cultural Center, New York, NY, March 24, 2006, followed by a joint meeting with the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, New York, NY, March 25, 2006. The ASN sessions were useful since they brought the Society into contact with quite a number of graduate students and recent Ph.Ds. The annual business meeting was in Washington, D.C., November 18, 2006, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 16-19. Michelson, Orlich and several SRS representatives also engaged in dialogue with the new leadership of the Romanian Cultural Institute in several meetings held in Washington, D.C. in connection with their desire to redirect and strengthen their involvement in Romanian studies abroad.

The Fifth International Congress on Romanian Studies was held at Ovidius University, Constanța, Romania, June 25-28, 2007. Paul Michelson was chair and Adina Ciugureanu (Ovidius University) was responsible for local arrangements. There was a much better regional turnout than at Congresses Three and Four, with an attendance of well over 200. On the other hand, participation by the Romanian Academy was nil and Romanian intramural academic disputes affected attendance. The quality of the program continued to rise and for the first time younger scholars outnumbered the veterans of the first four congresses.

The 2007 business meeting was held in New Orleans, LA, November 17, 2007, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 15-18. Similar business meetings were held in Philadelphia, PA, November 21, 2008, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 20-23; and Boston, MA, November 13, 2009, in conjunction with the AAASS meeting, November 12-15. The SRS participated in the First Central Europeanists reception at the Philadelphia AAASS in 2008, where SRS members were able to meet others interested in the "Lands in Between" and to publicize the SRS. Another new venture was the presentation of the First 2009 SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize to Roland Clark (University of Pittsburgh) at Boston. Margaret Beissinger (Folklore, Princeton University) was chair of the selection committee.

Irina Livezeanu (History, University of Pittsburgh) was elected President for 2010-2013, with Bill Crowther (Political Science, University of North Carolina-Greensboro) as Vice-President. When Jim Augerot retired as Treasurer in the fall of 2010, Bill was persuaded to replace him and Lavinia Stan (Political Science, St.

Francis Xavier University) was chosen as Vice-President. In the same year, Ashby Crowder (University of Maryland) was persuaded to take over as the website guru. In 2011, Roland Clark (History, University of Pittsburgh) became the Newsletter Editor and, beginning with Vol. 34 (2011), the newsletter was published entirely in electronic form, which allowed expansion in size, color, and improved graphics. In 2013, Lara McLaughlin (independent scholar) became the web site manager. In addition, a graduate student representative was added to the board for the first time in 2010 in the person of Ashby Crowder. He was succeeded by Catherine Hansen (Princeton University) in 2011.

Livezeanu's tenure was a torrent of innovations and activities. In the summer of 2010, a brand new, redesigned SRS website was launched at [www.society4romanianstudies.org]. Ashby Crowder, who had agreed to edit the site, also set up and handled the new SRS FaceBook page as well.¹⁴ The Society presented its second Graduate Student Essay Prize to Anca Mandru (University of Illinois) in 2010; Margaret Beissinger was chair of the selection committee. The prize was announced at the annual business meeting in Los Angeles, CA, November 19, 2010, held in conjunction with the ASEEEES meeting, November 18-21. At the same meeting, Jim Augerot was recognized for his long service to the SRS.

The big news of 2011 was the implementation of a formal set of SRS Bylaws in January. These had been developed during the previous year. The major innovation was that, effective with this year, membership in the Society for Romanian Studies was opened internationally. Financial and logistic obstacles to international membership had gradually fallen by the wayside in an electronic age; the response from Romania and elsewhere has been encouraging. The SRS also created several new categories of membership, including supporting, sponsor and patron members, with a view toward increasing funding for the organization.

In 2011, Cristina Onose (University of Toronto) was awarded the third Graduate Student Essay Prize at the national business meeting in Washington, D.C., November 18, 2011, held in conjunction with the ASEEEES meeting, November 17-20. Matt Ciscel (English, Central Connecticut State) served as committee chair. The same year, the Society presented the First SRS Book Prize to Tom Gallagher (University of Bradford, UK). Margaret Beissinger chaired this new committee.

As usual, pride of place in 2012 went to the Sixth International Congress on Romanian Studies held at Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu, Romania, July 2-4,

2012, with the theme of “Europeanization and Globalization: Romanians in Their Region and the World.” This was the first themed SRS congress; the others had been general conferences. In a great and centrally-located, participants were served a rich intellectual fare in a significant historical ambiance. Support for the congress was provided by Universitatea Lucian Blaga, the Romanian Cultural Institute, the American Embassy, the Universitatea Națională de Arte and the Primăria Sibiu. Attendance included probably the best mix of people from a wide range of countries, the various regions of Romania and new participants. There were three plenary lectures and 52 panels along with collateral events. Things went so well that it was felt that five-year intervals for the congresses was just too long. Matt Ciscel was the chair of the International Conference Committee, and local arrangements was chaired Alexandra Mitrea (Universitatea Lucian Blaga). Later in 2012, the SRS held its usual business meeting in New Orleans, LA, November 16, 2012, in conjunction with the ASEEEES meeting, November 14-17. The 2012 SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize was won by Jonathan Stillo (City University of New York).

The major initiative in 2013 was the creation of an H-Romania site, with R. Chris Davis (History, Lone Star College) as the SRS liaison to H-Net. It is anticipated that this site will become the Society's most widely-used vehicle for scholarly interchange.¹⁵ The SRS also began a joint-membership arrangement with the Romanian Studies Association of America.

In 2013, the SRS continued its prize awards. The Book Prize Committee, chaired by Bill Crowther, awarded the Second Biennial SRS Book Prize to Gail Kligman (UCLA) and Katherine Verdery (CUNY); while the Graduate Student Essay Prize committee, chaired by Roland Clark (Eastern Connecticut State University), awarded the annual SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize to Florin Poenaru (Central European University). These prizes were awarded at the annual meeting held in Boston, MA, November 22, 2013, in conjunction with the ASEEEES meeting, November 13-24, which also marked the 40th anniversary of the Society for Romanian Studies.

The officers of the SRS for 2014-2015, the first to be chosen completely under the new by-laws, were: President Lavinia Stan (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada), President-Elect James Koranyi (University of Durham, UK), Past-President Irina Livezeanu (University of Pittsburgh), Secretary Paul Michelson (Huntington University), Treasurer Bill Crowther (University of North Carolina-Greensboro) and Newsletter Editor Roland Clark (Eastern Connecticut

State University). In January 2015, Emelian Ghelase (București) took over as SRS webmaster, and in fall 2015 Ben Thorne (Wingate University) became Newsletter Editor.

Under Stan's leadership, the brisk pace of change and innovation continued: in addition to its H-Net and Facebook site,¹⁶ in 2014, the SRS added a LinkedIn site¹⁷ and a Twitter site;¹⁸ the bylaws were amended to iron out some ambiguities with the 2011 document (the changes went into effect at the end of 2015); fundraising for projects was aggressively pursued; the number of supporting organizational members was expanded; and a major new publishing initiative with Editura Polirom was established: *Studii Românești/Romanian Studies/Études Roumaines/Rumänische Studien*, with Irina Livezeanu and Lavinia Stan as project editors, Andrei Terian (Universitatea Lucian Blaga, Sibiu) as series consultant, and an impressive international advisory board. The first two volumes appeared in 2015: Roland Clark's *Sfântă tinerete legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică* and Vladimir Solonari's *Purificarea națiunii. Dislocări forțate de populație și epurări etnice în România lui Ion Antonescu, 1940-1944*.

The Graduate Student Essay Prize committee, chaired by James Koranyi, awarded the 2014 Prize to Roxana Lucia Cazan (Indiana University), which was presented at the 2014 SRS Annual Business Meeting in San Antonio, TX, November 21, 2014 (in conjunction with the ASEEEES convention, November 20-23, 2014). In 2015, the Book Prize Committee, chaired by Holly Case (Cornell University), awarded the Third Biennial SRS Book Prize to Sean Cotter (University of Texas at Dallas); while the Graduate Student Essay Prize committee, chaired by Delia Popescu (Lemoyne University), chose for the 7th annual SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize a paper by Ion Matei Costinescu (University of București). These prizes were awarded at the annual meeting held in Philadelphia, PA, November 19-22, during the ASEEEES convention.

A highlight of Stan's 2014-2015 term was the Seventh SRS International Congress, held June 17-19, 2015, in București, hosted by the Faculty of Political Science at the University of București (FSPUB). The general theme was "Linking Past, Present and Future: The 25th Anniversary of Regime Change in Romania and Moldova (1989-1991)." Monica Ciobanu (SUNY-Plattsburgh), a veteran of the 2012 congress, was program chair and Oana Suciu (FSPUB) was local arrangements chair. Support for the congress was provided by FSPUB, Institutul Cultural Român, Arhivele Naționale ale României, Institutul pentru Investigarea Crimelor Comunismului și Memoriei Exilului Românesc, Consiliul Naționale

pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securității, Centrul de Informare Turistică al Primăriei Municipului București, The Romanian Studies Association of America and the Academia de Studii Economice, București. Over 300 panelists participated, setting a congress benchmark for attendance. The younger generation was heavily affirmed as perhaps the majority of attendees were first timers, and the traditional “Big Three” disciplines — History, Language and Literature — no longer dominated the program. Jim Augerot and Paul Michelson were recognized for their contributions to Romanian Studies.

The SRS is now generally recognized as the premier international professional organization for scholars concerned with Romania and Moldova and as such is affiliated with the South East European Studies Association (SEESA); the Romanian Studies Association of America (RSAA); the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES); the American Political Science Association (APSA); and the American Historical Association (AHA).

The last forty years have seen remarkable changes in Romania, Moldova and the contemporary world. These transformations have significantly impacted the mission and work of the Society for Romanian Studies, as formerly closed societies began to transition following the events of 1989-1990. “Transition to what?” one may ask. The fact that the answer to this question is still not at all clear means that Romanian studies will be a necessary, critical, and fruitful area of scholarly investigation for the foreseeable future. T.S. Eliot asked in 1939,

How can we be concerned with the past
And not with the future? or with the future
And not with the past?
... my business is not to run away, but to pursue,
Not to avoid being found, but to seek ...
It is at once the hardest thing, and the only thing possible.”¹⁹

The Society for Romanian Studies has not only managed to successfully fulfill its mission for over four decades in diverse and complex circumstances; it has done so with persistence and integrity. *Mulți înainte.*¹⁹

Notes

1. Primary sources are: three articles by Michael Impey: “The Present State of Romanian Studies in the United States and Canada. A Review Article,” *Modern Language Journal* 59 (1975), pp. 262-72, a sequel, “Some Reflections on Romanian Studies in the United States and Europe, 1975-2007,” Marina Cap-Bun (ed.), *Studiile românești în lume în 2008/Romanian Studies Around the World in 2008* (București: Editura Universitară, 2009), pp. 58-73, and “The Land of Rushing Streams: Returns and Departures,” *New International Journal of Romanian Studies* 2 (1999), Nr. 1-2, pp. 84-108; two pieces from Jim Augerot: his contribution to Lilliana Ursu, Ioana Ieronim and Archbishop Chrysostomos (eds), *Să vezi lumea cum o văd ceilalți/To See the world as others see it: American and Romanian Alumni Share Their Fulbright Impressions* (București: Editura Vremea, 2003), pp. 22-23, and (with Marina Cap-Bun) “Studiile românești în Statele Unite ale Americi,” Marina Cap-Bun (ed.), *Studiile românești în lume în 2007/Romanian Studies Around the World in 2007* (București: Cartea Universitară, 2007), pp. 13-21; a fairly complete file of RSG and SRS newsletters; and personal recollections.
2. An extensive and continually updated SRS chronology, including a listing of all officers, board members, meetings and significant events, may be found under the “About the SRS” tab on the SRS website at www.society4romanianstudies.org.
3. This had been demonstrated in part by the appearance under the editorship of Keith Hitchins of the first volume of the journal *Rumanian Studies* in 1970. Hitchins presciently noted that, “[i]t seemed to some of us who participated in these exchanges that the time had come to extend the scope of collaboration to include the publication of new work being done in the humanities and social sciences on both sides of the Atlantic. Our hope for Rumanian Studies is ... that it will further the study in the United States of all aspects of Rumanian history and culture by providing the growing number of American scholars specializing in these fields with a place where they may present the results of their research ...,” Keith Hitchins, “From the Editor,” *Rumanian Studies* 1 (1970), p. vii.
4. Thereafter, at the December 1973 meeting of the Modern Languages Association, Romanian language specialists formed the Romanian Studies Association of America as an affiliate of the MLA. Impey, “Romanian Studies,” 1975, p. 271. Regrettably, this association, formed and led primarily by Romanian émigrés, remained generally apart from the RSG/SRS, but in 2012, the RSAA leadership participated enthusiastically in the SRS Sibiu Congress. Subsequently, a joint membership was created for those who wanted to be part of both the RSAA and the SRS; this new cooperation between the SRS and RSAA will strengthen Romanian studies. In 1974, on a European level, Sorin Alexandrescu, University of Amsterdam, organized the Asociația Internațională de Studii Românești, which subsequently began to publish the *International*

Journal of Rumanian Studies (under the editorship of Alexandrescu) in 1976. The First Congress on Romanian Studies at the Sorbonne in 1986 was a joint project of the SRS and the AISR.

5. See Paul E. Michelson, "Discovering Romanian ... and Romania: Rodica Boțoman and Romanian Studies at The Ohio State University, 1974-2003," *Lingua: Language and Culture, NS*, Vol. 9 (2010), Nr. 1, pp. 51-65.

6. Vol. 4 (1977-1978), Vol. 5 (1979) and Vol. 6 (1980) were composed largely of papers from the 1977 conference/symposium. Vol. 8 (1981-1982), under the guest editorship of Paul Michelson, was a special issue on Romanian studies, including papers from the OSU conference/symposia, SRS conferences, and an ACLS summer research conference on Romanian studies.

7. In Vol. 5 (1987), Nr. 1 and Nr. 2, and Vol. 6 (1988), Nr. 1.

8. For a discussion of Romanian studies following 1989, see my "The Status of Romanian Studies," *New International Journal of Romanian Studies* 3 (2000), pp. 10-18, and "Area and Romanian Studies in an Era of Transition and Change," *Cap-Bun, Studiile Românești 2007*, 2007, pp. 149-66. See also the various contributions in *Cap-Bun's* two volumes cited in Note 1.

9. Including working with the journal, *Romanian Civilization*, Vol. 1 (1992)-Vol. 9 (2001), making extensive contributions to the book publication program of the Center, and participating in its series of summer conferences in Iași, beginning in 1995.

10. At this meeting, it was unanimously decided that Presidential and Vice-Presidential terms would be three years.

11. The term of office was extended to four years to avoid complications with the planning and execution of SRS international congresses.

12. Impey, "Reflections," 2009, p. 63.

13. Sorin Alexandrescu, "Pourquoi, de nouveau, cette revue?" *New International Journal of Romanian Studies*, Nr. 1-2, 1998, pp. 6-10.

14. The SRS Facebook site's address is [<https://www.facebook.com/society4romanianstudies>].

15. The H-Romania site is located at [<https://networks.h-net.org/h-romania>].

16. By 2015, the SRS Facebook page had reached over 1,800 likes at [<https://www.facebook.com/society4romanianstudies>].

17. [<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Society-Romanian-Studies-7444230>].

18. [<https://twitter.com/Soc4RoStudies>].

19. T.S. Eliot, "The Family Reunion," *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962), pp. 228, 259, 283.