

SOCIETY FOR ROMANIAN STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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From the President

During the past months, our various SRS committees, editors, and officers have worked hard to identify prize winners, line up new manuscripts for the *Journal of Romanian Studies*, and recruit new titles for the SRS-Polirom book series, consolidate the mentorship program, and keep track of submissions for the international conference we are organizing in June 2018 at ASE in București!



Congratulations to Dana Mureșan and Roland Clark for winning the SRS prizes! Dana's essay, "Brâncuși: The Construction of a Romanian National Hero," won the 2017 SRS prize for the best graduate student essay for excellent research, a high level of sophistication, and the author's ability to "showcase the field of Romanian Studies in an international context," as the adjudicating committee noted. Roland's *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (published with Cornell University Press in 2015, and translated two years later as *Sfântă tinerețe legionară*. Activismul fascist în România interbelică for the SRS-Polirom Romanian Studies book series) was recognized as the best monograph in a very strong field of contenders. The prize committees – chaired by Chris Davis and Alex Drace-Francis, and including Valentina Glajar, Ron King, Diane Vancea, Peter Gross, and Inessa Medzhibovskaya – worked hard to select from among the submissions.

The SRS-Polirom series has two books forthcoming in the next few months: Cristina Vătulescu's *Police Aesthetics: Literature, Film and The*

Secret Police (Stanford University Press, 2010), and Maria Bucur's *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth Century Romania* (Indiana University Press, 2010). These will be the fifth and sixth titles published in the Studii Românești/Romanian Studies/Études Roumaines/Rumänische Studien series.

By the October 15 submission deadline, the committee that is organizing the 2018 SRS conference received over 100 individual presentation proposals, 14 roundtable proposals, close to 50 panel proposals, and a dozen other proposals for book launches, poetry readings, art projects, and film screenings. These came from over 380 graduate students, faculty members, researchers, film directors, and writers working in countries as diverse as Romania, Moldova, the UK, Ireland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, Turkey, the USA, Canada, Georgia, Russia, China, Taiwan, and Japan. The committee will make its selection by early December. 2018 will be a busy year for the organizing committee!

I want to thank our dedicated team of volunteers, especially Roland Clark, Irina Livezeanu, Roxana Cazan, and Alexandra Ghit, for helping maintain a constant SRS presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Our strong social media presence reflects our expanded membership and the increased relevance of Romanian Studies across borders. We encourage all of you to send us news items of interest to Romanian scholars, faculty, and students. Last, remember that SRS membership is on a calendar year basis, running from January to December. You will thus need to renew your membership later this year. Conference participants will have to pay both SRS membership dues and the conference registration fee for their name to be included in the final program.

Best wishes to all of you!

Lavinia Stan

Journal of Romanian Studies Call for Manuscripts

EDITORS: Lavinia STAN (lstan@stfx.ca) and Margaret BEISSINGER (mhbeissi@princeton.edu)

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Radu CINPOES (Radu.Cinpoes@kingston.ac.uk)

ADVISORY BOARD: Dennis Deletant (Georgetown University, US), Jon Fox (University of Bristol, UK), Valentina Glajar (Texas State University, US), Peter Gross (University of Tennessee, US), Brigid Haines (Swansea University, UK), Irina Livezeanu (University of Pittsburgh, US), Mihaela Miroiu (National School of Political Science and Public Administration, Romania), Steve D. Roper (Florida Atlantic University, US), Domnica Rădulescu (Washington and Lee University, US), Paul E. Sum (University of North Dakota, US), Cristian Tileaga (Loughborough University, UK), Lucian Turcescu (Concordia University, Canada), and Vladimir Tismăneanu (University of Maryland, College Park, US).



The Society for Romanian Studies is pleased to launch a new biannual peer-reviewed journal in collaboration with Ibidem Press. The new interdisciplinary journal examines critical issues in Romanian Studies broadly conceived, linking work in that field to wider theoretical debates and issues of current relevance, and serving as a forum for junior and senior scholars.

The journal considers manuscripts that draw on various theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives as understood in disciplines ranging from history, political science, philosophy, law and justice studies, anthropology, sociology, ethnography, and education to literature, linguistics, economics, business, religious, gender, film and media studies, art history, and music. It considers theoretically informed manuscripts that examine political, socioeconomic and cultural developments in Romania and Moldova, the situation of their ethnic minorities and their relations with the ethnic majority, as well as the position, culture, and history of Romanians and Moldovans living outside the shifting boundaries of those countries.

The journal also welcomes articles that connect Romania and Moldova comparatively with other states and their ethnic majorities and minorities, and with other groups by investigating the challenges of migration and globalization, changes and opportunities in international relations, and the impact of the European Union. Both articles with a historical focus and studies dealing with recent events will be considered.

The journal editors will consider the following [types of manuscripts](#):

- ♣ Original research articles (of up to 10,000 words, including bibliography)
- ♣ Review articles (of up to 3,000 words, commenting on 2-3 books on a common theme)
- ♣ Book reviews (of up to 1,000 words)

All submissions are subject to peer review. Special issues that group research articles on a common theme in Romanian Studies are welcomed. Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. The first issue will be published in 2018.

[HOW TO SUBMIT A MANUSCRIPT:](#)

To submit a manuscript, please first consult our [notes for contributors](#) to make sure the submission conforms to our guidelines.

- ♣ Your manuscript should include the title, a 200-word abstract, the text of the article, as well as a bibliography. Note that the abstract should be around 200 words, and the entire manuscript (including bibliography) no longer than 10,000 words.
- ♣ The entire manuscript should be double-spaced, including the abstract and the bibliography.
- ♣ The manuscript should not include your name and affiliation anywhere. Please save your manuscript as a PDF file. The name of the file should include your name.

Send the manuscript by email as an attachment to Lavinia Stan (lstan@stfx.ca.) Your email cover letter should include your full name and institutional affiliation.

Note that we will consider only manuscripts that are not under review elsewhere. To this effect, your email cover letter should clearly state that your manuscript is not under review with other journals.

Update on the 2018 SRS Conference in Bucharest

CO-ORGANIZER:



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS:

MEDIA PARTNERS:



October 15 was the deadline for submitting proposals for the “#Romania100: Looking Forward through the Past” international conference, organized by the Society for Romanian Studies to take place on 26-30 June 2018 at the Academia de Studii Economice (ASE) in Bucharest. The organizing committee – composed of Peter Wagner (chair), Margaret Beissinger, Alexandra Ghit, Petru Negură, Delia Popescu, Anca Șincan, Svetlana Suveică, and Rodica Zaharia – has received a record number of proposals from over 370 graduate students, junior and senior scholars, artists, and researchers. We have proposals for 49 panels, 14 roundtables, 103 individual papers, and 13 art, poetry, book, and movie presentations. The organizing committee will notify those who submitted proposals by [December 4](#).

We would like to thank the following departments, institutions and organizations for their generous promise to act as institutional partners of our 2018 event: Facultatea de Relații Economice Internaționale (REI) of ASE, Facultatea de Științe Politice and Institutul de Cercetare of Universitatea Bucharest (FSUB and ICUB), Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative (SNSPA), Universitatea Ovidius in Constanța, Universitatea Pitești, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare in Suceava, Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității (CNSAS), Arhivele Naționale, Facultatea de Studii Politice, Administrative și ale Comunicării (FSPAC) of Universitate Babeș-Bolyai of Cluj, Muzeul Țăranului Român, Fundația Academia Civică, IOS-Germany, Banca Națională a României (BNR), Administrația Prezidențială Cotroceni, as well as the Romanian Studies Association of America (RSAA). In addition, Radio France Internationale Romania, LaPunkt, Radio România Constanța, Zeppelin, and Picture Factory have agreed to act as our media partners. Additional help will come from the local organizing committee, coordinated by Rodica Zaharia at ASE. We are hoping that, with their support, the conference will turn out to be not only the largest ever organized by the SRS, but also the liveliest.

Conference Institutional Partners

****University-affiliated sponsors will be featured in the Spring 2018 edition of the SRS Newsletter****

The Museum of the Romanian Peasant (Muzeul Țăranului Român)

Muzeul Țăranului Român is part of the European family of Museums of Folk Art and Traditions. It is a national museum, under the Ministry of Culture's patronage. In possession of an especially rich collection of objects and housed in a Neo-Romanian style historical building, our Museum developed a unique and original collection and was honoured in 1996 with the EMYA – European Museum of the Year Award. The Museum's original exhibition style is also reflected in its publications and in activities such as the Missionary Museum, the Village School, concerts, conferences, and exhibit openings.

The Romanian Peasant Museum was re-established in February 1990, barely one month after the demise of the Romanian Communist regime. The building assigned to it was originally built at the beginning of the twentieth century as an ethnographic museum. A National Art Museum was removed from the building in 1952, and the V. I. Lenin – I. V. Stalin Museum (later renamed the Marx–Engels–Lenin Museum) was installed in its place. In 1958, another propaganda institution, the Museum of the History of the Romanian Workers' Party was housed in the left wing of the building. The two museums functioned side by side until 1966, when the Marx-Engels-Lenin Museum was silently dissolved and a new Museum of the History of the Romanian Communist Party and of the Romanian Revolutionary and Democratic Movement, occupied the building until 1990.

The tormented history of the museum is incorporated critically into the current research and curatorial projects of the museums. The research department, concerned with anthropology, rural and urban ethnology, and visual studies benefit from a rich Image Archive.

Simina Bădică

siminarb@gmail.com

The National Archives of Romania (Arhivele Naționale)

The State Archives were established in Walachia and Moldavia based on the Organic Regulation, in 1831 in Bucharest and in 1832 in Iași. This was part of the plan of administrative modernization of the Russian general Pavel Kiseleff. The two archives were unified in 1862, after the Union of the Romanian Principalities, at which point the Iași Archives became part of the Archives in Bucharest, General Directorate. Archival activity was regulated in 1869 and 1872, but an Archives law was only issued in 1925. In Transylvania and Banat, archives were

regulated by the legislation in force in Hungary, while Austrian regulations applied in Bukovina. In the interwar period, regional archives were established in Cluj, Cernăuți, Chișinău, Brașov, Craiova, and Bistrița, and in 1969 a branch of the State Archives was established in every county.

The Romanian National Archives belong structurally to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and have 42 county branches. The Central National Historical Archives in Bucharest administers mainly the documents created by the Romanian state, but also very important collections of medieval records. The National Archives manage about 320 km of documents, organized in over 36,000 funds and collections.

Alina Pavelescu

alina.pavelescu@gmail.com

The National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives

The National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității – CNSAS) is the official authority that administers the archives of the former communist secret police in Romania, the Securitate. Beginning in 2015, on the occasion of the Seventh international conference of the Society for Romanian Studies, held in Bucharest, CNSAS started to collaborate systematically with the SRS. This collaboration consists in the participation of CNSAS board members or researchers in various scholarly events organized by SRS; our offer of guided tours of the CNSAS Archive, which is located in Popești-Leordeni, some 9 km southeast of Bucharest; professional advice offered to SRS members doing research at CNSAS; constant efforts to adjust to the needs of researchers coming from abroad and spending brief research periods at CNSAS, especially by providing copies from documents in the CNSAS archive.

Dragoș Petrescu

dragos.petrescu@fspub.unibuc.ro

The SRS-Polirom Book Series

Studii Românești - Romanian Studies - Études Roumaines - Rumänische Studien

Series Editors: Irina LIVEZEANU (irinal@pitt.edu) and Lavinia STAN (lstan@stfx.ca)

Assistant Editor: Narcis TULBURE (narcis.tulbure@gmail.com)

The editors welcome proposals for new titles for the SRS-Polirom book series! You can nominate the work of a colleague or former student, present to us a book you have already published abroad, or a manuscript that you have written directly in Romanian. You can find details about what needs to be included in the book proposal [here](#):



The series publishes scholarly books in Romanian authored or edited by SRS members. We will consider three types of manuscripts: 1) Romanian translations of scholarly monographs already published in a foreign language; 2) original scholarly monographs written in Romanian; or 3) edited collections of Romanian-language essays dealing with a Romanian Studies theme.

Books in this series are about Romania and/or Moldova—the populations living on their territories, or Romanian and Moldovan diasporas and cultures abroad. Manuscripts should have primarily an academic profile, and a disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary focus, drawing on history, political science, sociology, anthropology, law, economics, linguistics, literature, art history, or other fields. They should be based on sound and rigorous scholarly analysis, and include references and a bibliography. We prefer contributions that are free of jargon and thus likely more appealing to wider audiences. All proposals, manuscripts, and books offered for translation will be carefully reviewed for publication in the series.

Forthcoming:

Cristina Văţulescu's, *Cultură și Poliție Politică în Comunism* is in production and will reach bookstores before the end of 2017.



From the back-cover of the 2010 English language edition:

“The documents emerging from the secret police archives of the former Soviet bloc have caused scandal after scandal, compromising revered cultural figures and abruptly ending political careers. Police Aesthetics offers a revealing and responsible approach to such materials. Taking advantage of the partial opening of the secret police archives in Russia and Romania, Văţulescu focuses on their most infamous holdings – the personal files – as well as on movies the police sponsored, scripted, or authored. Through the archives, she gains new insights into the writing of literature and raises new questions about the ethics of reading. She shows how police files and films

influenced literature and cinema, from autobiographies to novels, from high-culture classics to avant-garde experiments and popular blockbusters. In so doing, she opens a fresh chapter in the heated debate about the relationship between culture and politics in twentieth-century police states.”

In 2018 we will publish Romanian translations of Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth Century Romania* (Indiana University Press, 2010), and Diana Dumitru, *The State, Antisemitism, and Collaboration in the Holocaust: The Borderlands of Romania and the Soviet Union* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Titles published in the series to date:

- ♣ Lavinia Stan și Diane Vancea, *România postcomunistă: trecut, prezent, viitor*
- ♣ Alex Drace-Francis, *Geneza culturii române moderne. Instituțiile scrisului și dezvoltarea identității naționale, 1700-1900*
- ♣ Vladimir Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii: dislocări forțate de populație și epurări etnice în România lui Ion Antonescu, 1940-1944*
- ♣ Roland Clark, *Sfântă tinerețe legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică. (WINNER OF THE 2017 SRS BOOK AWARD)*

2017 SRS Book Award

Committee: Alex DRACE-FRANCIS (University of Amsterdam), Peter GROSS (University of Tennessee), and Inessa MEDZHIBOVSKAYA (New School, New York)

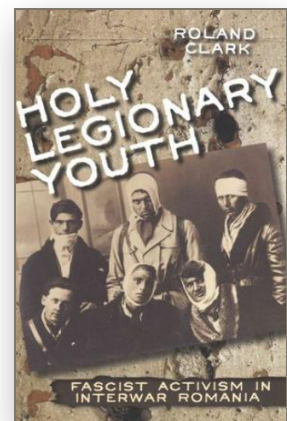
The SRS Fourth Biennial Book Prize is awarded to the best new academic book on a Romanian topic published in English between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2016. The committee received a number of outstanding submissions in several academic disciplines. Four books in particular stood out:

Virginia Hill and Gabriela Alboiu's *Verb Movement and Clause Structure in Old Romanian* (Oxford University Press, 2016) shows that although early Romanian texts display predominantly Latin and Romance morphology patterns, they also signal a strong manifestation of the Balkan *Sprachbund* where syntax is concerned. These findings help us to understand more clearly the linguistic processes that paved the way for the emergence of modern Romanian.

Dennis Deletant's *British Clandestine Activities in Romania during the Second World War* (Palgrave, 2016) contains priceless and rare information concerning Britain's wartime role in Romania, that by its nature is hard to access. Deletant not only clarifies the documentary record of a contested story but offers careful and calibrated assessments of the ultimate impact of British activities, as well as providing insights from Romanian archives that have not hitherto been available to British researchers.

Ștefan Ionescu's *Jewish Resistance to Romanianization* (Palgrave, 2016) greatly enriches our understanding of Jewish resistance to the Antonescu regime during the Second World War. Focusing on the Jewish community of Bucharest, Ionescu defines his topic as "an asynchronic duel fought with legal weapons in an asymmetric warfare." His fine analysis, based on extensive archival research, adds to our knowledge both of the Jewish community's plight and activities, and of their impact on the social and political history of wartime Romania as a whole.

In the end, the committee agreed unanimously to award the prize to Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Cornell UP, 2015). Clark's book offers a comprehensive reinterpretation of the interwar Legionary movement from the perspective of the history of everyday social life. Moving away from abstract paradigms of "the nature of Romanian fascism," Clark tells us more about what the Legionaries actually did (and did not) do, using a large number of new archival sources. His book covers the career of the movement from beginning to end and treats a remarkable range of topics, with a good structure, contextualization, regional coverage, and comparison with other fascist movements. Especially impressive is the way Clark situates interwar Romanian political phenomena in the context of broader paradigms of international social, cultural, political, and religious history, and brings the topic up to date with a closing reflection on the memory of Legionary activity in post-war and present-day Romanian society. For the breadth and depth of its analysis, its rich documentation, and its clear writing style, Clark's work stands out against a very strong field.



Interview with Roland Clark

*Roland Clark, Lecturer in Modern European History, University of Liverpool
(Interview by Cristina Plămădeală and Ana Fumurescu)*

SRS: How did your interest in the Romanian Legionaries arise?

RC: I first became interested in the Legion of the Archangel Michael during a second-year course at the University of Sydney in 2000 entitled “Fascists and Anti-Fascists.” Although the course focused mostly on Western Europe, the lecturer mentioned that “there were also clerical fascisms” and I was fascinated by the idea of priests with guns. The English-language literature available to me at the time had been written decades ago by people like Eugen Weber, Nicholas Nagy-Talavera, and Emmanuel Turczynski. It Orientalized and romanticized the Legion, making it look like an exotic religious cult. It was not until much later, when I was able to read Armin Heinen, Francisco Veiga, Constantin Iordachi, and others, and to see the archives for myself, that I realized how misleading these early studies were. But by that time I was well and truly hooked. The real story of the Legion is much more interesting than the myth.



SRS: Did you encounter any methodological issues while conducting research for this project?

RC: Every project faces numerous methodological questions, some of which you expect and others you don't. Looking back, two stand out with this particular project. The first has to do with the question of what “fascism” is. The term has a long and contested past in the historiography, in part because scholars insist on treating fascism as a thing that really exists and which just has to be recognized. During the 1980s and 1990s it became fashionable to create bullet-point lists of characteristics that all fascist movements and regimes apparently shared. Over the past fifteen years the consensus has moved towards looking at fascist ideology. I am not particularly interested in arguing about categories, but I don't trust fascists to tell me what they're really thinking when they make political speeches, so defining fascists according to ideology doesn't work for me either. I solved the problem for myself by asking what people in the 1930s meant when they said “fascist,” and how identifying oneself as a fascist in interwar Romania changed the way people treated you.

The other big challenge that stands out to me has to do with the sources I had available. I had a wealth of memoirs written by former legionaries, which you can't trust because they are trying to present the movement in terms that might seem appealing to us in the twenty-first century (or whenever they were writing). I also had numerous police reports from the national and regional archives, many of which were based on rumours and unreliable informants. The Securitate archives also provided a host of testimonies given by legionaries in prison, often under torture. All of my main collections of sources were thus highly suspect. Just because a

source is problematic doesn't mean that you can't use it, it just means that you have to be careful what sorts of information you take from it and how you interpret it. I often had to read sources "against the grain," and to corroborate information from one source with several other types of sources.

SRS: How do you situate your work in the field of Romanian studies, and in eastern European historiography more broadly?

RC: My research on the Legion contributes to a growing body of high quality literature on Romanian fascism. In the last ten years, we have seen substantial new studies on the Legion by Oliver Jens Schmitt, Traian Sandu, Armin Heinen, Constantin Iordachi, Rebecca Haynes, Valentin Săndulescu, and Radu Harald Dinu, as well as marginal contributions on legionary history by historians working on related topics such as eugenics or the Holocaust in Romania, both of which are blossoming fields at present.

My book also relies heavily on local studies of everyday life in different parts of the country and on the new histories of gender in Romania. We're lucky that social and cultural histories from below have become more and more common in and about Romania, which allow books like mine to be written. Two manifestos talking about new ways of writing *Alltagsgeschichte* authored by historians of East-Central Europe came out in *The Journal of Modern History* (2008) and *Aspasia* (2009) while I was writing, and they articulated very clearly my aims and methods in *Holy Legionary Youth*.

The last thing worth saying about historiography is that the narrative I tell about the Legion and about interwar Romania more generally reflects the stories told by Armin Heinen, Keith Hitchins, Irina Livezeanu, Leon Volovici, Zigu Ornea, Maria Bucur, Ionuț Biliuță, and others. Heinen taught me to see the Legion as a fascist social movement, for example, and Livezeanu showed me how important nation-building and the student movement was. Volovici, Ornea, and Hitchins emphasized the centrality of antisemitic intellectuals to Romanian nationalism, and Bucur convinced me that gender matters. As do most people, when I write I rely on metanarratives and empirical research that other scholars have developed and my book is very much a product of the collective wisdom that the field has developed over time.

SRS: What can your findings teach us about Romanian national memory/politics today?

RC: As I said earlier, I don't believe that fascism is a "thing" that appears, disappears, and reemerges. Instead, I'm interested in the social and cultural connotations that the term "fascism" has for people in different historical contexts. It strikes me as particularly interesting that there is still a lot of debate around whether or not the Legion of the Archangel Michael was fascist. Legally and politically it is no longer okay to be a fascist, but there is still a lot of sympathy for the Legion in many circles, and disassociating it from European fascism is one way to make Codreanu's ideas socially acceptable again. Similarly, many legionaries suffered and died in communist prisons, making it easy to resurrect them as martyrs in a post-socialist context. It is important to remember that just because someone suffered for their ideas doesn't mean that those ideas were worth suffering for.

Moreover, the social meanings of the Legion for activists and for the authorities changed over time, and associating oneself with the Legion meant different things in the 1930s and in the 1950s. If my research teaches us anything, it should be that social movement identities are historically contingent, and that a one-size-fits-all model simply doesn't work when applied to long historical periods. Simplistic models are not analytically useful but they are politically potent, and the people who use them do so because they are not interested in what actually happened in the past, but care about the political capital they can gain from praising or condemning the Legion. Basing our beliefs on myths about the past rather than on evidence-based research is dangerous, and it frustrates and terrifies me to see how often this happens not only in Romania but throughout the world.

SRS: You wrote this book as a PhD thesis. Tell us a bit about your doctoral studies. What would be your advice to students currently pursuing graduate studies on Romania?

RC: I originally decided to write a PhD on the Legion in 2001, and wanted to study it as a political religion, building on theories by Robert Bellah and others. Judith Keene, who was the resident expert on fascism in Sydney at the time, refused to supervise such a thesis because she said that it misrepresented what happened. Political religion interpretations of fascism came to dominate the field over the next few years, but Keene was right – once I delved deeply enough into the archives it became obvious that this was a complete misinterpretation of how legionaries actually experienced their movement. Unable to study the Legion in Australia, I moved to Pittsburgh in the US to do a PhD with Irina Livezeanu. The advantage of studying in the US is that it takes a long time to finish your doctorate. My ideas changed frequently during the seven years I spent at the University of Pittsburgh, and my first piece of advice for graduate students is to take the time to let your ideas percolate rather than tying yourself to a theory or method that you haven't had time to properly appreciate.

My second piece of advice is to spend as much time as you can in Romania. I lived in Braşov for eighteen months before starting graduate school, took research trips to Romania almost every summer, and spent the last two years of my PhD there. American historians usually do their research halfway through the PhD and then move back to Romania to write up their research. I wrote my dissertation up while living in Romania, which gave me invaluable access to libraries and archives and meant that I could fill in gaps in my research that I hadn't noticed until I started writing.

SRS: What is your current research about?

RC: At the moment I am writing two books, both about religion in interwar Romania. The first looks at attempts to restructure the Romanian Orthodox Church during the early 1920s, which included a number of attempts to increase lay participation and piety, with a strong anti-sectarian (meaning, anti-neo-Protestant) agenda. I'm interested in how Orthodox leaders framed their initiatives and why these attempts at revival so frequently ended in schism. The second is a microhistory of Petrace Lupu of Maglavit in 1935. He was a shepherd who had visions and began supernaturally healing people, provoking massive pilgrimages to his small village in Dolj county. Looking at the variety of different reactions to Lupu lets me interrogate secularization, politics, and beliefs about modernity on a national scale.

SRS 2017 Graduate Essay Prize

Committee: R. Chris DAVIS (Lone Star College-Kingwood) chair, Valentina GLAJAR (Texas State University), Ron KING (San Diego State University), Diane Vancea (Ovidius University of Constanța).

The 9th Annual SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize is awarded to the most outstanding unpublished essay or thesis chapter written in English, by a graduate student in any social science or humanities discipline, on a Romanian subject during the long academic year 2016–17. The prize committee received over twenty essays from a wide range of disciplines, submitted by graduate students and recent graduates from across North America, Europe, and Asia. The committee debated the merits of many prize-worthy essays. In the end, one essay stood out above the others. It is with great pleasure that the committee awards this year’s Graduate Student Essay Prize to Dana Mureșan for her essay “Brâncuși: The Construction of a Romanian National Hero.”

Mureșan’s well-researched and highly sophisticated essay examines through the lens of Brâncuși the complex relationship of art and nationalism. It explores the role of Romania in the formation of Brâncuși’s universal modern art and, in turn, the role of Brâncuși and his art in the formation of Romanian identity and in the promotion of national culture. In particular, Mureșan addresses the value the Romanian state derived from claiming Brâncuși as a national hero, as a cultural symbol combining historic identity and contemporary sophistication. Yet this appropriation explicitly could not include full appreciation for the content of the work, given that Brâncuși the émigré was producing art that was distinctly non-socialist in theme and format. The paper beautifully explores this contradiction, especially as it played out in official Romanian artistic discourse, highlighting both statements and silences of that official discourse. All at once, Mureșan reflects on the legacy of Brâncuși’s biography and art in both Romania and Paris, widens the analytical frame of Romanian identity discourses, and makes a significant contribution to an array of scholarly fields, including nationalism studies, identity studies, and art history, among others. Equally important to the committee, the essay showcases the field of Romanian Studies in an international context. Finally, Mureșan achieves something very rare in academic writing these days, namely the ability to communicate ideas to specialists and non-specialists alike.

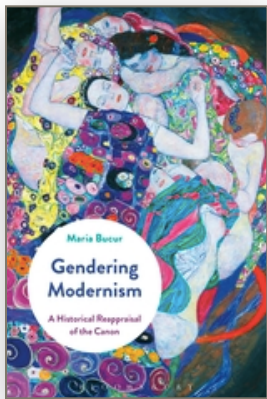
The committee felt three other finalists from this year’s competition deserved special mention: Kathryn Grow Allen’s “Migration, Conversion and the Creation of an Identity in Southeast Europe: A Biological Distance and Strontium Isotope Analysis of Ottoman Communities in Romania, Hungary and Croatia”; Alin Rus’s “‘Building’ Cultural Patrimony in Ceaușescu’s Neopatrimonial Romania”; and Karin Steinbrueck’s “Aftershocks: Nicolae Ceaușescu and the Romanian Communist Regime’s Responses to the 1977 Earthquake.” The quality and diversity of this year’s submissions certainly bodes well for the future of Romanian studies.

Dana Mureşan has a BA in European Studies from the University of Toronto, during which she also studied at Sciences Po Paris for one year. In 2016 she received an MA in European Identity and Integration from the University of Amsterdam, for which she wrote the thesis “Brâncuşi: The Construction of a National Hero.” Her primary research interests include art and politics, cultural history, and particularly the comparative analysis that involves such developments in Eastern and Western Europe.



Featured Book

BUCUR-DECKER, Maria. *Gendering Modernism: A Historical Reappraisal of the Canon*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.



Gendering Modernism offers a critical reappraisal of the modernist movement, asking how gender norms of the time shaped the rebellion of the self-avowed modernists, and examining the impact of radical gender reformers on modernism.

Focusing primarily on the connections between North American and European modernists, Maria Bucur explains why it is imperative that we consider the gender angles of modernism as a way to understand the legacies of the movement. She provides an overview of the scholarship on modernism and an analysis of how definitions of modernism have evolved with that scholarship. Interweaving vivid case studies from before the Great War to the interwar period – looking at individual modernists from Ibsen to Picasso, Hannah Höch to Josephine Baker – she covers various fields such as art, literature, theatre, and film, whilst also demonstrating how modernism manifested itself in the major social-political and cultural shifts of the 20th century, including feminism, psychology, sexology, eugenics, nudism, anarchism, communism, and fascism.

This is a fresh and wide-ranging investigation of modernism which expands our definition of the movement, integrating gender analysis and thereby opening up new lines of enquiry. Written in a lively and accessible style, *Gendering Modernism* is a crucial intervention in the literature, which should be read by all scholars of the modernist movement, as well by those studying 20th-century history and gender studies more broadly.

Soundbite: The Aftermath of the Romanian Protests

By Oana-Valentina Suci, University of Bucharest

One usually likes never ending stories. But would this be the case of protests and civic involvement? For the last two decades, irrespective of the governing party or coalition, the majority of Romanians consider their country to be heading in the wrong direction. Throughout the last two and a half decades, according to the survey data of various pollsters, over half of the population is dissatisfied with political, economic, and social developments in Romania. However, it is only when considering the past five years that one may speak of the creation of a critical mass of people protesting the manner in which the central and local government chose to administer public affairs.

Starting in 2013, with the biggest environmental protest in post-war Europe (gathered under the slogan “Uniți, salvăm!” (“United we save!”), continued with the reaction to the tragic events in the winter of 2015 that generated the slogan “Corupția ucide!” (“Corruption kills!”), and reaching an unprecedented width and depth with the 2017 movement #Rezist, Romania has been experiencing a phenomenon labelled by several analysts and the media as a “social and civic awakening.” However, the picture is a more nuanced one. As much as one would like to analyze the events that keep unrolling, questions still have to be asked about how the social tissue of the Romanians all over the country, but also the ones forming the Romanian diaspora, is being regenerated. Or, if it is being regenerated at all.

One still has to find out not so much who the protesters in Romania and in the diaspora have been, or why they decided to protest, but whether they protested against certain individuals, or against public institutions. At first glance, it appears to be a combination of the two. But in a country where institutions rarely have a professional life longer than the people in them, one has to step outside the events in order to have a better view of the whole picture. The social and urban dynamic of the Romanian protests in the last years, at home and abroad, suggests that this might be the case, but the results are still difficult to quantify. Can one speak about the existence of a public space in Romania and in the Romanian diaspora? I would be tempted to give a positive answer to this question, but the effects remain to be followed in the months and years to come.

How were the social influence networks created and how did they continue to activate after the street movements were over? Various social networks and public groups have been created, counting tens of thousands of members, but online posting and debates are not the most efficient manner of political participation. Are they going to be turned into a participative political culture? On a more optimistic tone, the answer is yes. Several of these initially informal networks are beginning to literally get out of the online box and establish alliances, projects, and involve people from various *milieux*. From grassroots civic education projects, to apparently small community initiatives, to NGOs networks (see the platform Respect: https://www.facebook.com/pg/respectpentrototi/about/?ref=page_internal), to competitions for short documentaries, inspired by famous movie super-heroes that fight the monster of corruption (see, for instance, <http://www.onceinromania.ro/>), many of the individuals who took to the

streets in the last five years chose to put their know-how, time, and energy into the development and enhancement of a democratic, participative political culture. Their results are to be even more important if we take a look at the evolving taste for illiberal regimes in several countries in Romania's proximity, which are appreciated by various domestic politicians based at the central and local level of the country.

SRS Mentoring Program

SRS has launched a new mentoring program this year, pairing scholars at different stages of their careers or in different parts of the world to facilitate mutually beneficial discussions and communication. Junior scholars may gain local information formally from their supervisors and informally from others they come into contact with. Informal mentorship is particularly important for students and scholars working in the West whose primary supervisors are not themselves specialists in Romania and Moldova. Similarly, students and scholars based in Eastern Europe find it beneficial to establish informal relationships with their colleagues abroad, with whom they can discuss disciplinary trends and other questions of mutual interest. Mentoring also benefits senior scholars by helping them stay abreast of new literatures and trends in the field, as well as providing insights into other universities and other countries.

Some of our current mentors include Florin Abraham, Ana Bazac, Margaret Beissinger, Stefano Bottini, Roxana Bratu, Maria Bucur, Monica Ciobanu, Roland Clark, Aleksandra Djurić-Milanović, Donald Dyer, Peter Gross, Bob Ives, James Kapaló, Irina Livezeanu, Paul Michelson, Petru Negură, Sergiu Musteață, Valentin Săndulescu, Lavinia Stan, Cristian Tileagă, Narcis Tulbure, F. Peter Wagner, and Rodica Milena Zaharia.

Please get in touch with us via the [SRS website](#) if you are interested in becoming a mentor or a mentee. The purpose of the SRS Mentoring Program is to provide SRS members with invaluable support and established scholars the opportunity to help shape the future of the field and support new research. Responsibility for making the mentoring relationship work rests with the individual mentor/mentee, but the SRS acts as a sponsoring organization that matches mentors and mentees and suggests parameters for the relationship. The SRS aims at facilitating formal mentoring initiatives in cases where mentors and mentees do not know each other, have no clear understanding of their current expertise areas, and need help to connect.

Mentoring relationships may either be established around specific, short-term goals, such as writing a book proposal or developing strategies for acceptance into graduate schools, or may involve a series of discussions about career trajectories, publication plans, accessing libraries, archives, or fellowships, or other issues of mutual interest to the mentor and mentee. Individual pairs should agree on the nature and longevity of the commitment, but we envisage that most mentoring relationships will involve several informal conversations over a period of six months.

Roland Clark

Roland.Clark@liverpool.ac.uk

Soundbite from the Republic of Moldova

By Petru Negură, "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University, Republic of Moldova

According to estimates put forth by its government and the national bank, the Republic of Moldova is experiencing a relative economic stabilization and a slight growth in GDP (approximately 3%). Nevertheless, independent experts (Expert-Grup) do not believe this growth is sufficient for a sustainable economic recovery, particularly given Moldova's ongoing brain-drain, which sees the country's youngest and most active citizens emigrating in search of better employment opportunities and living conditions abroad.

Although the New York based Kroll Corporate Investigations and Risk Consulting Firm has now provided a second report on "the robbery of the century" ("jaful secolului") (about one billion dollars stolen in 2014 from three Moldovan banks) those deemed responsible for this "robbery" have yet to be convicted. The principal "suspect" under investigation, the Moldovan entrepreneur Ilan Shor, who was head of one of the banks at the time of the robbery, is still free to go about his business, even occupying the post of mayor in the city of Orhei since July 2015. With the Moldovan government having recently decided that the responsibility for the repayment of the stolen money would now be assumed by the state, the debt the country obtained as a result of this decision is projected to be paid in full only by 2042.

On the political front, Moldova's parties are preparing for parliamentary elections, to be held in the fall of 2018. The Democratic Party (Partidul Democratic), the president of which is oligarch Vlad Plahotniuc, and the Party of Socialists (Partidul Socialiştilor), the country's largest parliamentary opposition party, promoted and eventually adopted the modification of the electoral system by transforming the formerly proportional electoral system into a mixed one. Half of the deputies would now be elected on party lists, with the other half being chosen from among individual candidates, nominated by the parties.

Policy experts, however, believe this system would favour larger parties at the expense of smaller ones. Because smaller parties have a relatively lower representation throughout the country, as well as limited communication and persuasion capacity (lacking preferential access to certain radio and TV stations), they will likely have the most to lose from this new arrangement. As a result, this electoral reform reveals a tendency to institutionalize a model of governance based on political fraud and influence peddling.

Although it only gained 16% of votes in 2015, the Democratic Party now has a dominant majority formed out of a large number of parliamentarians who had arrived in Parliament as members of other parties, but later joined the coalition led by the Democratic Party due to various political transactions carried out behind closed doors. Thus, under the current electoral reform, the Democratic Party and the Party of Socialists will likely compete for primacy in the future Parliament, with recent polls projecting the Party of Socialists to come out on top in the

2018 elections. Despite apparent contradictions between these two parties, some commentators indicate the existence of hidden arrangements between them. In the meantime, the opposition parties, especially the Action and Solidarity Party (Partidul Acțiune și Solidaritate), led by Maia Sandu, and the Platform for Dignity and Truth (Platforma Demnitate și Adevăr), led by Andrei Năstase, are undergoing a period of latent reconfiguration, and attempting to expand their communication strategies outside of Chișinău, where they have the greatest support.

Despite the economic crisis and the lack of trust in their country's political system, Moldova's citizens continue to go on with their lives in a way they consider acceptable and personally useful.

New Publication

VASILE, Cristian, coord. *„Ne trebuie oameni!” Elite intelectuale și transformări istorice în România contemporană* [“We need people!” *Intellectual Elites and Historical Transformations in Modern and Contemporary Romania*] Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, 2017.

Research for this book was funded by the National Research Council (CNCS). The team led by Dr. Cristian Vasile revisited the historical canon regarding the formation of intellectual elites during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While existing works on the topic focus either on the elimination of old elites in times of radical social change or on the creation of new elites by each new political regime, this new study focuses on a third mechanism—the use of old intellectual elites for new modernization projects. This mechanism of historical and social change appears at every major transition (“historical disjuncture”) but is accorded less significance both in history/social sciences and in public discourse.



The book argues that the recuperation and conversion of intellectual elites is part of a resilient mechanism of historical change in East Central Europe, and specifically in Romania, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The mechanism becomes easier to grasp when considering the succession of modernization projects that Romania, like most of East Central Europe, has undergone. A young state having to accommodate shifting borders, ethnic structures, religious identities, administrative traditions, and resilient forms of social inequality, Romania experimented with most of the visions of modernity being either imported or imposed in East Central Europe during the long twentieth century. Modernization projects trying to materialize such visions – liberalism, socialism, fascism, Stalinism, national Stalinism, market democracy, took place in a socially underdeveloped milieu, one that was not attuned to the historical time(s) of Western Europe. Copied, imitated, distorted and adapted by local actors or imposed from above, the various projects of modernization ended up incomplete, overlapping, partial, and fragmented.

CHAPTERS: “Introduction: Fragmented Modernities: Intellectual Elites and Historical Transformations in Modern and Contemporary Romania” (Cristian VASILE); “Agents of Change: The Romanian Principalities’ Orthodox Clergy from Feudal Regime to Nation-State” (Ionuț BILIUȚĂ); “Cholera, Public Hygiene, Social Modernity and Racial Degeneration in Nineteenth-Century Romania” (Călin COTOI); “Conversions and Re-Conversions: Academic Elites and Political Change in Romania, 1930-1960” (Valentin SĂNDULESCU); “The Geometry of a Complex Relationship: Elite, models of State Modernization, and Political Regimes in Twentieth-Century Romania” (Camelia ZAVARACHE); “Modernity, Modernism, Modernization and Propaganda in Communist Romania” (Cristian VASILE); “The Portrait of N. Departing Communist Orthodoxy: On Religious Policy After 1948” (Anca ȘINCAN); “Professions of risks: Economists, statisticians, and Cyberneticians in the Socialist Period” (Narcis TULBURE).

Workshop Report

“Hidden Galleries” Annual Project Workshop

“Materializing Religion in the Secret Police Archive: Methodological, Ethical and Legal Approaches to the Study of Religions in the Secret Police Archives”

September 11, 2017, ÁbtI, Budapest, Hungary

Report by Anca Șincan, Gheorghe Șincai Institute for Social Sciences & Humanities of the Romanian Academy

The ERC-funded project “Creative Agency and Religious Minorities: Hidden Galleries in the Secret Police Archives in Central and Eastern Europe” constitutes the first attempt at conducting comparative research on the secret police archives, from the perspective of the history and anthropology of religion, in three countries: Romania, the Republic of Moldova, and Hungary. This approach offers a perspectival shift on the uses of the archives by focusing on its material content, mainly on the confiscated religious art and publications that were produced by religious minorities in the region. The project’s Principal Investigator, Dr. James Kapaló, is Senior Lecturer in the Study of Religions at University College Cork, Ireland.



On September 11, 2017, the “Hidden Galleries” Project organized its first annual workshop, hosted in Budapest, Hungary, by ÁBTI (Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára), the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security. The event brought together scholars from different disciplines, such as anthropology, history, and the study of religions, and from a range of countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Scholars from Hungary, Romania, the Republic of Moldova, Lithuania, Serbia, and Ireland participated in four sessions covering important issues linked to religion and the archives. The main focus of the first international “Hidden Galleries” workshop was to raise questions concerning the methodological, legal, and

ethical aspects encountered when working with religious minorities and state security archives and archival institutions.

The workshop opened with a short welcome and introduction by Dr. Gergő Bendegúz Cseh, the Director General of ÁBTL, who briefly informed the audience about the changes that have appeared in the legal framework of the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security in 2017. This was followed by an introduction to the “Hidden Galleries” ERC Project, made by Dr. James A. Kapaló.

The three papers of the first session, “Socialist Legalities,” were dedicated to presenting the legal framework for the regulation of religious denominations in the twentieth century and the repressive policies towards religious minorities during Communism in Hungary, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova. Szilvia Köbel’s paper, “Legal context of religious activities in Hungary between 1945 and 1989/90,” raised questions concerning the terminology used by the Hungarian Communist regime in order to clarify the legality or illegality of a religious group. Igor Cașu’s presentation, “The ambiguities of socialist legality: Religious groups in Soviet Moldavia under late Stalinism, 1944-1953,” explored the application of legal codes in practice, rather than in theory, illustrating the ways in which repressive and punitive steps taken by the authorities were influenced by local context. Corneliu Pintilescu’s paper, “Turning Religious Practices into Political Guilt: Jehovah’s Witnesses in the Narratives of the Securitate Files,” set the stage for comparative discussions between the repressive policies of the Hungarian and the Romanian Communist regimes towards the same religious group.

The second session, entitled “Historical Contexts and Case Studies,” opened with Csaba Fazekas’s paper, “The State and the Problem of New Religious Movements in Interwar Hungary,” which raised debates about the terminology used when referring to religious groups and how this issue can be connected with aspects of nationality. In her paper, “Jehovah’s Witnesses in the era of state socialism in Hungary, 1948-1989,” Éva Petrás offered a glimpse into the mindset of Jehovah’s Witnesses and the political manner in which the Hungarian Communist authorities understood the message of their publications in order to criminalize them. The session closed with Rasa Pranskevičiūtė’s paper, “Acting in the Underground: Life as a Hare Krishna Devotee in the Soviet Republic of Lithuania (1979- 1989),” during which she also presented the legal framework of the former secret police archives in Lithuania and the possibilities of access for scholars from various disciplines.

Issues pertaining to methodology and ethics were dealt with during the third session, which was opened by Anca Șincan with a presentation on the themes of morality and sexuality encountered in archival documents related to religious life. After offering examples of personal experiences while conducting research in the Romanian secret police archives (CNSAS), Dr. Șincan opened the floor for debate concerning the differences between the legal framework of ÁBTL in Hungary and its equivalent in Romania, CNSAS, the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives. Questions relating to how much access scholars should have to the private life of an individual and how the regulations of the secret police archives control such access were the main concerns of the discussion. James Kapaló’s paper on the various categories of photographs connected with religious groups that can be found in the secret police files led to an interesting discussion regarding the methods of incrimination used by NKVD, as well as other

police practices. His paper also highlighted the value of images in the archival context and the need for scholars to begin focusing on these heretofore overlooked issues. Kinga Povedák shared some of her experiences of the obstacles she had encountered during her archival and ethnographic research as part of the “Hidden Galleries” Project, challenging the audience to reflect on some important ethical issues associated with the Project. The discussion then moved in a different direction, with scholars reflecting on their own situation, as “detectives” looking for individuals who are willing to offer information about events from the past, a stance “not too different from that of a secret police agent,” in Anca Şincan’s opinion.

The last session, entitled “Minority Religions and State Security Archives,” addressed important questions regarding the character of religious persecution, how it is reflected in the state security archives, and the frameworks in place for scholars to access materials on this subject. Dorin Dobrinu’s paper, “Religious Movements in the Archives of Romanian Repressive and Secret Services (1919-1944): The Evangelicals,” outlined the repressive policies in place in interwar Romania and led to a discussion on the comparative severity of repression across the region. Cristian Vasile, whose presentation focused on the politics of research on religious denominations in Romanian Archives post 1989, highlighted one of the key questions at the heart of the “Hidden Galleries” project. Namely, his paper focused on how to address the fascination and paradoxical desire on the part of the researchers and the public to find “historical truth” in the texts generated by the secret police. Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović’s presentation addressed the problems of access to secret police archives in the former Yugoslavia and suggested ways in which the archives could be used for research on Yugoslav religious minorities during communism.

Existing scholarship on religious groups in the secret police archives has been dominated by mainstream and majority church concerns focused on institutions and hierarchies and on the search for justice based on “historical truths.” The papers presented during this workshop raised new questions, offered some new perspectives, and sought solutions for some of the most important issues that face scholars who deal with aspects of religion in the archives. The lively debates carried out during this workshop centered around the following key issues: the political and religious interference in the control of secret police archives; the problems associated with access and with the ethical use of data by historians and anthropologists; how scholarship impacts societal prejudice and state regulation of religion in post-socialism, and the issue of cultural patrimony of confiscated religious materials.

Get to Know our Scholars

JAMES KAPALÓ, Professor at University College Cork, Principal Investigator of the *Hidden Galleries*.

Interview conducted by Anca Şincan

AS: I don't have a good first question. I have a second, I'd say, good question, but let's start with this. Who is James Kapaló?

JK: I'm a scholar of religions working in Ireland. My academic history started in cultural studies and then East Central European studies and I have PhD in the study of religions from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. So primarily I am a scholar of religions focusing on religious minorities. When I say religious minorities, I mean not only minority religions present in any given context or state, but also the religion of minority peoples, for example the Orthodox Christianity of the Gagauz minority in Moldova. My main area of focus has been Romania and Republic of Moldova, but I've also done some research working in Hungary and currently I am the Principal Investigator of the project Hidden Galleries. So that is my academic profile in brief.



AS: Every research calls for something personal from the researcher or comes from something personal. Is this true for you?

JK: Absolutely! I was a young man just coming out of university when the change of system happened across East Central Europe. I was actually in Budapest when the Berlin Wall came down and the border was opened, so I have a personal history there. My father's family is from Hungary, so I had a lot of experiences of Hungary in the 1980s' at the end of the socialist period. Furthermore, my family belongs to a religious minority in Hungary—Greek Catholic. So, growing up I was fascinated by the local religious culture of my grandmother and relatives in the village, which was somewhere between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. And I think this sparked my interest and my imagination—state socialism in relation to religion and the existence of minority religions, especially the more unusual in-between-type religious communities.

AS: You are heading a European Research Council (ERC) project on religious minorities in Secret Police archives. Tell us what the project is about in a few words.

JK: As briefly as I can, which is difficult when you are very deeply engaged with a project of this scale and scope. The project's idea arose from research I was doing in 2013-2014 when I first had exposure to secret police archive files both in CNSAS and in the National Archives in Romania, looking at files of secret police, police, and the Gendarmerie. I realized when I started the research into one particular religious group I am writing a monograph about, the Inochentists, that some material related to the group that is not publicly available, or collected in other archives, museum collections, or by the Romanian Academy, may possibly be in files collected by police and the Secret Police. It was then I had a Eureka moment.

I think it was in the winter of 2014 and I went into the archives in the morning and by the evening when I went out, met up with friends for dinner, I was just euphoric because I had found my first postcard-icon in a Gendarmerie file in the National Archives. This was the Eureka moment because I realized that aspects of the sacred—I call it sacred cultural patrimony of religious groups—are to be found in these files. So I became increasingly interested in the non-textual dimension of the files, and less interested in the historical or textual narrative per se. My focus switched to the visual and material cultures contained within the archives, which I recognized as incredibly important in understanding cultural production during communism, and also during the period leading up to it. So the project really is about this—it is about the material, the local, and the vernacular (which is, if you like, a synonym for folk, local folk cultural elements). So in the project all this comes together and looks at religious minorities in the archives through a new lens based on a new set of sources that have been largely overlooked up to this point.

AS: Could you tell us a little about the project goals, which I understand also to be a little different? Is this the result of the type of project funded by the ERC, or does this come from you?

JK: Within the project, we strive to connect the everyday people and religious communities we research to the academic research, and this is a little different from standard basic research work. In terms of why this is the case with my project, it is a bit of both really, my own desire to make the project impactful and the ERC's concern with societal challenges facing Europe. The project's outputs include a public exhibition, an online exhibition, and an online digital database, as well as the usual sort of academic outputs. Looking at the full spread, there are a number of audiences the project team hopes to reach.

The public exhibition clearly has to do with the public perceptions of religious minorities and the role they played during state socialism. I'm very interested in trying to influence some very negative opinions that persist across the region in regard to religious minorities, often encouraged or propagated by majority Churches. I believe there is insufficient understanding of the personal narratives involved with those groups, and the project is trying to influence the way society at large views difference and the reasons why markers of identity, markers of difference in society during totalitarianism, become so powerful and so significant. This is unusual for scholars, and I describe this aspect of the work as engaged scholarship. This isn't the same as advocacy scholarship. A lot of scholarship that went on about religion in East Central Europe during communism was funded from the outside and it was about advocacy, advocating for the rights of religious minorities repressed at that time. We're now dealing with a context in which the religious persecution is insufficiently understood in relation to the agency of those groups, their creativity, what they were able to achieve. Instead of looking at them purely as victims, it is about their creative processes and practices... And secondly, it is about how a more holistic understanding of that history helps us to understand the state of the Romanian, Moldovan, and Hungarian societies today.

I think there is also very important work to do in terms of reaching an academic audience, and I am reluctant to express it in this way, but religious studies or the academic non-confessional study of religions needs some development in Romania as I see it. That is not to say that it needs to imitate the way the study of religions or religious studies is structured across Western Europe, but I think there is a lot of interesting work to be done and I think incorporating religious studies into the heart of Romanian academic life would be a good thing, through programs, conferences and even departments. I'd like to think, to hope, that this kind of project will spark the imagination of scholars in Romania to think about religious studies in another way and to see it not simply as a vehicle for or a means of elaborating the role of powerful religious forces, but actually as a means of reflection on local religious communities, narratives, and identities.

AS: What does it mean to lead an ERC project, to be an ERC Principal Investigator?

JK: That's a very good question and one that I am constantly forced to reflect on myself because one of the things about ERC projects, the nature of this kind of project, is that they demand or require a team and collaborative work. It can't be done by a single researcher, but at the same time the single researcher, the PI, has to keep an overview of the entire team, of the central research questions that are being asked, and the research process and outputs. So a lot of my time is spent thinking about how to give the researchers what they need in order to be able to conduct the research in different contexts, but at the same time draw them back together to talk to each other, to share information, and to understand how what they're doing fits into the broader picture of the research project. This is a little bit different from the usual way of working as an academic, especially in the field of religious studies where most scholars will tend to beaver away on their own personal work. People do collaborate all the time, but not as intensively as you need to in an ERC project. The other aspect is the administrative and bureaucratic side to the project, and I would advise anyone considering applying for an ERC project to factor in as much time as possible for looking after things like budgets, recruiting people, dealing with HR issues, data protection, and so on. These take a lot of time and a lot of head-space.

AS: You know, you are one of the few researchers with an ERC project that deals with Romania. Has it made an impact in Romania that you deal with ... Romanian things?

JK: It's early days yet, and we're only beginning the research phase in Romania. So in the next twelve months there will be a number of opportunities to really publicize the project, but then the findings will really make an impact in the years that follow. I'm having very interesting conversations, for example, with CNSAS as an institution and we've involved them from the very beginning. That would be one of the areas where I hope to have most impact, in a sense that the research team that is working there will be coming up with interesting methodological questions but also on the role of institutions in society, and the role, later, of museums and public exhibitions. As to what the scholar can hope to achieve in terms of societal impact through this kind of project I hope to be able to say more in the year or two's time.

AS: This is actually one of my last questions and is taking us on a bit of a detour. When some researchers talk about Eastern Europe, there is this label that is put on Eastern Europeans. It's the reverse of Grace Davies believing without belonging and they say it's belonging without believing. You've been a researcher of religious matters in Eastern Europe now for some years. Do you find this true?

J.K. No, in actual fact, I don't find it true. As researchers of religion, we have to be reflexive and recognize that we're attracted to where religion is powerful and strong, and that's among believers. For example, my PhD research was on the Gagauz of Moldova. In Moldova, anyway, I think religiosity is generally quite a strong motivating factor, and in certain communities is particularly strong. That's the case among the Gagauz, or at least that is how I experienced it. Prior to that, my academic apprenticeship was among the Moldavian Csángós, who again constitute a very strong Catholic community. So I don't find this to be the case. But if one were to look more generally across the region with a sociological eye, I think it might be the case in some societies. In Hungary, belief is generally not particularly strong, in Slovenia it's not particularly strong. But anyway, I think it's a general misconception that religion is all about belief, this is a very Protestant approach. Religion as lived experience encompasses so much more that is related to "being," to practice, to community, and to the body.

But I think you have to look at each national context very closely and then you have to be reflexive as a researcher. As a scholar of religion, I find myself drawn to contexts in which religion is a powerful motivator and where as a scholar I am forced to take religious motivation seriously. Often, scholars of religion, especially those who are not coming at it from a confessional or a theological perspective, overlook or don't give sufficient weight to religious motivations, whether they be theological ideas, religious practices, the influence of churches in societies, or local religious personalities and leaders. This is one of the areas that I am particularly interested in, the local. We have very strong national narratives of what constitutes religion in Romania and Romanian history. I am interested in looking at the grassroots contexts where you have to engage both in ethnographic and in historical, archival work to really understand what is being missed, what narratives, what personal stories, what motivating factors are being washed over by these grander narratives on religion in the region.

AS: What's next for James Kapaló?

JK: It's difficult to see "the next" when you're only just getting stuck into a project of this scale, but I hope to continue with research on more informal aspects of the way in which religions and states cooperate in regulating society and communities.

H-Romania Announcement

H-Romania is now in its third year of operation, with approximately 290 subscribers to the network. We have published over 15 reviews of books written in English, Romanian, German, and Serbian, in disciplines ranging from history to anthropology to literature, with many more titles on the way. While we are happy with our progress thus far, we still have room to grow and improve. We want to encourage SRS members to join H-Romania and publicize the network across the broad field of Romanian Studies. Please feel free to contribute postings and announcements, notify us of any recently published books and calls for papers/applications in your field, and volunteer to review books and report on conferences. And be on the lookout for an H-Romania Twitter handle, coming soon.

We would also like to take this opportunity to invite new network and book-review editors. Please contact Chris Davis <rcdavis@mail.h-net.msu.edu> if you are interested in joining the H-Romania editorial team.

Member News

CORNEL BAN published *Ruling Ideas: How Neoliberalism Goes Local*, Oxford University Press (2015), which looks at the political economy of the Romanian transition and crisis through a comparison with Spain.

MONICA CIOBANU is a fellow in residency at Imre Kertesz Kolleg Institute in Jena, Germany in Fall 2017.

THEODOR DAMIAN published *Gregory of Nazianus' Poetry and his Human Face in It*. Sophia Institute: Theotokos Press, 2017.

DENNIS DELETANT of Georgetown University received the "Award for Contribution to Romanian Studies" at the annual Gala of Alianta on 22 September.

GAIL KLIGMAN was awarded an honorary degree, doctor honoris causa, from the University of Babeş-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, on May 25, 2017.

MARIA LUPAS is now a Lecturer at Sophia University Junior College Division in Japan.

KIKI SKAGEN MUNSHI published a *Whisper in Bucharest* (2016). Covering the period 1939 to 1985, this novel follows the life of two Romanian peasant boys and their Jewish friend from the harsh days of the Second World War through the coming of the Communist rule. Part historical novel, part spy story, *Whisper in Bucharest* was published in Bucharest in June 2014 in both English and Romanian editions.

CORINA SNITAR co-authored *Women's Experiences of Repression in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe* (Routledge 2017) together with Melanie Ilic, Kelly Hignett, and Dalia Leinarte.

ADAM J. SORKIN retired from Penn State in June as Distinguished Professor Emeritus; he had taught at Penn State Brandywine since 1978. Sorkin also guest edited and translated a special translation issue of *Paragraphiti*, "Seven Young Romanian Poets," with art by Daniel Ursache (May 2016), and a special Romanian double issue of the journal *Poem*, translating 112 of 119 poems by 24 authors, *Poem* [U.K.] 4.3-4 (September-December 2016).

ALEX TIPEI won the John Iatrides Best Dissertation Award from the Modern Greek Studies Association for her PhD dissertation, "For Your Civilization and Ours: Greece, Romania, and the Making of French Universalism," defended at Indiana University in 2016. Tipei's work stood out because of the manner with which she was able to present her nuanced analysis of how, to paraphrase her, French universalism was not made in France, but [remade] in places like Greece and Romania.

Member Publications

BOTTONI, Stefano. *Long Awaited West: Eastern Europe since 1944*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017.

DUMITRU, Diana. *The State, Anti-Semitism, and the Collaboration in the Holocaust: The Soviet-Romanian Borderland*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

RUSU, Mihai Stelian. (2017). "Transitional Politics of Memory: Political Strategies of Managing the Past in Post-communist Romania," *Europe-Asia Studies* 69 (8): 1257-1279.

SORKIN, Adam J. and Diana Manole, trans. *The Hunchbacks' Bus* by Nora Iuga. Fayetteville: Bitter Oleander Press, 2016.

_____ and Irma Giannettiand, trans. *Syllables of Flesh* by Floarea Țuțuianu. Washington, DC: Plamen Press: 2017.

_____, Mădălina Bănuțu, and Magda Cârneli, trans. *A Deafening Silence* by Magda Cârneli. Bristol: Shearsman Books, 2017.

SUVEICĂ, Svetlana. "Negotiating Loyalty. The Bessarabian Germans from the Russian Empire to the Romanian Nation-State (1917-1919)," in Florian Kühner-Wielach and Markus Winkler, (eds.) *Mutter: Land – Vater: Staat. Loyalitätskonflikte, politische Neuorientierung und der Erste Weltkrieg im österreichisch-russländischen Grenzraum*. Veröffentlichungen des IKGS München, Band 134, Regensburg, Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2017: 135-152.

_____ and Virgil Pâslariuc. (2017) "Gorod Kishinëv: ot zapadnoj okrainy Rossijskoj imperii k vostochnoj okraine Velikoj Rumynii" ["Chişinău City: Between the Western borders of the Russian Empire and the Eastern outskirts of Greater Romania"] in Aleksej I. Miller, Dmitrij N. Černyj, (eds.) *Goroda imperii v gody Velikoj vojny i revoljucii: sbornik statej*. Moskva: Nestor-istorija: 370-409.

Non-Member Publications

ANDREESCU, Gabriel, Diana Botău, and Oana Măriuca Constantin, (eds.) *Doctrina Internațională a Tratatului Trecutului Comunist*. Bucharest: Editura C. H. Beck, 2016.

BAN, Cornel, Leonard Seabrooke, and Sarah Freitas. (2016) "Grey matter in shadow banking: international organizations and expert strategies in global financial governance." *Review of International Political Economy* 23 (6): 1001-1033.

_____. (2015) "Austerity versus stimulus? Understanding fiscal policy change at the International Monetary Fund since the great recession." *Governance* 28 (2): 167-183.

_____ and Daniela Gabor. (2015) "Banking on bonds: The New Links between States and Markets." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 54: 617-635.

BOCA, Ioana (ed.). *Romulus Rusan: Istorie, Memorie, Memorial sau Cum se Construiește un Miracol*. Bucharest: Fundația Academia Civică, 2017.

BĂNICĂ, Mirel. *Nevoia de Miracol: Fenomenul Pelerinajelor în România Contemporană*. Iași: Polirom, 2014.

CUSCO, Andrei. *A Contested Borderland: Competing Russian and Romanian Visions of Bessarabia in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century*. Budapest: CEU Press, 2017.

DOBRE, Claudia-Florentina and Ghiță, Cristian Emilian. *Quest for a Suitable Past: Myth and Memory in Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest: Central European University, 2017.

POGORILOVSCHI, Ion. *Noica și Brâncuși: Deschideri în Seninătatea Ființei*. Bucharest: Editura Academia Română, 2016.

POPA, Ion. *The Romanian Orthodox Church and the Holocaust*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017.

PREDA, Caterina. *Art and Politics under Modern Dictatorship: A Comparison of Chile and Romania*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

ȘCHIOP, Adrian. *Șmecherie și lume rea. Universul social al manelelor*. Chișinău: Cartier, 2017.

TOTOK, William and Macovei Elena-Irina. *Între Mit și Bagatelizare: Despre Reconsiderarea Critică a Trecutului*, Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu și Rezistența Armată Anticomunistă din România. Iași: Polirom, 2016.

Symposium Dedicated to the Centenary of the 1918 Union

Title: „1918 – 2018. Limba și cultura română – structuri fundamentale ale identității naționale: evaluări, perspective”

Time: 26–28 September 2018

Location: Iași, Romania

The Institute of Romanian Philology has organized its 17th annual International Symposium in collaboration with the Cultural Association “A. Philippide.” In 2018, the annual international symposium will consider Romanian philology within the context of the “Great Union” of the Romanian provinces in 1918, probing the ways in which printed text contributed to national unity. Katherine Verdery and Keith Hitchins are serving on the board of this event.

RSAA Journal Announcement

The Romanian Studies Association of America Journal is a peer reviewed journal founded in the United States whose main purpose is to promote Romanian Studies on the American continent, as well as around the globe.

The main goal of our community of humanists is to share past and present experiences, resources, knowledge and opinions in order to create historic understanding, educate future generations about Romania’s culture and traditions, and contribute to the development of intellectual values in our world.

The *RSAA Journal* is committed to publishing academic essays, translations, interviews, fiction and non-fiction, drawing and photography in order to support dialogue at multiple levels of expression.

To view the journal’s current issue, [click here](#).

SRS Membership Announcement

We use dues to help with monetary prizes for outstanding publications and to budget and pay for the cost of our upcoming 8th International Conference, which will be held in Romania in 2018. In addition, members play a vital role in the Society by supporting our membership program, submitting manuscripts for the new scholarly *Journal of Romanian Studies*, proposing nominations for the prizes, and getting to vote on the officers and Board members.

You may renew your membership or join SRS, at the SRS website:

(<http://www.society4romanianstudies.org/membership/how-to-join>) by using paypal, or by mail. Contributions from lifetime members are most welcome. In addition, organizational sponsors and patrons may be approved by the Board on a case by case basis. Member organizations do not have a vote but their support will be acknowledged by SRS, including linking to organizational web sites. Please send your dues and/or donations directly by check (made out to SRS) to:

William Crowther	Dues
Department of Political Science	Free first year for graduate students \$10 for renewing graduate \$25 for a regular membership
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	\$45 for joint SRS/SEESA membership
UNCG P.O. Box 26170	\$37 for joint SRS/RSAA membership
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About the Society of Romanian Studies

The Society for Romanian Studies (SRS) is an international inter-disciplinary academic organization founded in 1973 to promote professional study, criticism, and research on all aspects of Romanian culture and society, particularly concerning the countries of Romania and Moldova. The SRS is generally recognized as the major professional organization for North American scholars concerned with Romania and Moldova. It is affiliated with the [South East European Studies Association](#) (SEESA); the [Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies](#) (ASEEES-- formerly known as the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies or AAASS); the [American Political Science Association](#) (APSA); the [American Historical Association](#) (AHA); and the [Romanian Studies Association of America](#) (RSAA).

More information about the SRS, including current officers, the national board, and membership information, can be found on the SRS [website](#).

If you have any recent activities to report (publications, conferences organized, etc.) please email such information to the Newsletter Editors, Ana Fumurescu and Cristina Plămădeală (s.romanian.studiesnewsletter@gmail.com).