

SOCIETY FOR ROMANIAN STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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From the President

While waiting for nicer weather, the Society for Romanian Studies has started a number of activities in 2018. We thank the volunteers who serve as chairs and members of our committees, the Polirom and Ibidem presses, which support our publications, our members, who act as liaisons with other scholarly associations, as well as the many institutional and media partners who are helping us with our June 2018 international conference in Bucharest.



Many of you know that 2018 is an anniversary year for our Society, which celebrates 45 years since its foundation. To honor this historical marker, we offer a series of weekly interviews with selected SRS members throughout the year. The interviews are published in LaPunkt, a reputable electronic platform in Bucharest, and are meant to introduce SRS members teaching and researching outside of Romania and Moldova to audiences in those countries. Links to these interviews, coordinated by Anca Şincan and facilitated by Eugen Stancu, are available [here](#), and regularly posted on our social media.

A number of SRS committees are active this year. The Graduate Student Essay Prize Committee, which includes Jennifer Cash (chair), R. Chris Davis and Marina Cap-Bun, will offer \$300 to the best essay on a topic relevant to Romanian Studies, written in English by a graduate student. The committee plans to award the prize at our June conference in Bucharest, much earlier than in previous years, when the prize winner was announced in September and the check was handed out in November at the ASEEEES conference. This move is meant to bring added visibility to the award, since few of our current SRS members attend the ASEEEES annual meeting.

The call for submissions is posted on our [website](#).

With some delay, a Nominating Committee was formed earlier this year to organize elections for our four open Board positions. Besides the SRS officers, the SRS Board includes eight non-student members and two graduate students elected at large. This time around, the positions in need of replacement are all for non-student members. Nominations were accepted until March 10. The slate of candidates for this election was prepared by the Nominating Committee, which includes Irina Livezeanu (chair), Roland Clark, Mihaela Diaconu, and Mihaela Șerban. Another round of elections will be organized, according to our by-laws, in late 2018, to replace several officers whose mandates expire in January 2019.

The Mentorship Committee, which consists of Roland Clark (chair), Margaret Beissinger, Robert Ives, Petru Negură, Cristina Plămădeală, and Anca Șincan, continues to welcome expressions of interest from mentors and mentees. The program has had moderate success thus far, with mentors and mentees reporting meetings, information that they exchanged, and all around benefits from mentoring. Information about the program is available [here](#).

With an expanded membership twice as large as our 2014 numbers, SRS remains the premier Romanian Studies association in the world. We enjoy an excellent reputation, draw members from 27 countries and some 180 universities, research centers and institutes, and face few problems in recruiting students and scholars in the field. Nevertheless, a new Membership Committee is trying to increase retention in years when SRS holds no conference in Romania, reevaluate our membership categories and payment options, and understand the needs of our expanded membership so that we can tailor our activities. For example, our annual general meeting is organized at the ASEEEES conference, mostly because the SRS was founded in the United States and most of its members were North Americans. However, ASEEEES is increasingly inadequate as we recruit members from other continents who attend other professional conferences. One possibility is to have a general SRS meeting at the international conference we hold in Romania every three years, with ASEEEES (or some other organization) retained as a venue in all other years. The committee has done most of the preliminary work needed to launch the survey after the June conference. The Membership Committee consists of Roland Clark (chair, and SRS Secretary), Lavinia Stan (SRS President), Margaret Beissinger (SRS Vice-President), Bill Crowther (SRS Treasurer), Petru Negură, Philippe Blasen, Monica Heintz.

Planning for the June 2018 international conference is well under way. The organizing committee includes F. Peter Wagner (chair), Margaret Beissinger, Alexandra Ghit, Petru Negură, Delia Popescu, Anca Șincan, Svetlana Suveică, and Rodica Zaharia. As the largest event ever held by the SRS, the meeting has presented some unique logistical and organizational challenges for us. It has also shown the limits of organizing a conference of this magnitude only with volunteers, when registration fees are kept at a bare minimum in an effort to attract participants. As in 2015, the organizing committee asked for advanced registration in an effort to remove the less committed participants from our already crowded conference program and ensure participation. Rodica Zaharia has provided invaluable logistical support and opened communication channels with Academia de Studii Economice (ASE), which generously welcomed our event in its Piața Romană buildings. The preliminary conference schedule and program are posted on the [website](#), together with other useful information (including convenient hotels, restaurants, and transportation). The website will continue to be updated, so please check it regularly.

We look forward to seeing you in Bucharest!

Lavinia STAN

What SRS Means to You

ROXANA CANACHE

PhD Candidate, McGill University

SRS provided me, personally, with an opportunity to get to know people working in my field. Aside from keeping me up to date with the latest works published both abroad and in Romania and bridging the distance not just geographically, but in terms of mentalities and ideology, SRS also introduced me to the inner workings of a scholarly society, its meanings, its long and short term goals, as well as professional perspectives.

ROXANA CAZAN

Assistant Professor of English, Saint Francis University, PA

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the Society for Romanian Studies and to its President, Dr. Lavinia Stan, for several reasons. Given its interdisciplinary nature, SRS offered me a platform from which to formulate my scholarly interests. As a graduate student of comparative ethnic and postcolonial literature, deeply interested in women's studies and literature written by Romanian-American female writers, SRS offered me an academic home. My dissertation mentors guided me towards the work of my fellow SRS colleagues, and these texts were formative for me. The Society also helped scaffold my confidence as a scholar and first-year faculty by awarding me a Graduate Student Essay Prize. Showing confidence in my planning abilities, SRS trusted me with helping organize the conference schedule in 2015 and 2018 and selected me as a Board Member. I am truly fortunate to continue to be a part of this society.

MONICA CIOBANU

Professor of Criminal Justice, State University of New York in Plattsburgh

Since 2009 when I was elected as a Board member of the Society for Romanian Studies, my academic trajectory has been much affected by the ongoing expansion of SRS. Today it has come to consist of a truly transnational, dynamic, and diverse group of scholars from all over the world. Especially after serving as chair of the organizing committee of the 2015 International Conference of SRS held at the Faculty of Political Science in Bucharest, I have been inspired further in my interest in issues of democracy, political culture, and memory politics in Romania. It has been a rewarding experience to serve the SRS for almost a decade. I thank the current and previous president, all past and current board members and officers, and all my colleagues and friends in the Society for this opportunity.

ROLAND CLARK

Lecturer in Modern European History, University of Liverpool

I joined the SRS in 2010, soon after my PhD advisor, Irina Livezeanu, became President. Quite suddenly, I found myself in charge of editing the Newsletter, which taught me a lot about editing, building a bibliography of new publications, and advertising conferences and CFPs, as well as putting me in touch with a number of leading scholars whose names I only knew from books. Over the years, the SRS has stimulated my scholarship through its conferences and its publications, and it has given me experience in committee work and leadership, as well as keeping me up to date with the latest trends in the field.

VLADIMIR SOLONARI*Associate Professor of History, University of Central Florida*

Once Irina Livezeanu took over the leadership of SRS, the Society changed beyond recognition. It became more welcoming to scholars with diverse interests and research agendas, more dynamic, and more useful as a platform for scholarly interactions. The initiative to publish my book with POLIROM, which came from the SRS leadership, the great energy and high professionalism displayed by Irina Livezeanu and Lavinia Stan, as well as by their counterparts in Romania, were absolutely essential for making my book available to a Romanian audience.

Update: 2018 SRS Conference in Bucharest

CO-ORGANIZER:



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS:

MEDIA PARTNERS:



The 2018 SRS conference will take place from **June 26-30** at the Academy of Economic Studies/ Academia de Studii Economice (ASE), Bucharest, hosted by the Faculty of International Business and Economics (CCREI). Since the fall SRS newsletter was published, the 2018 Organizing Committee has been hard at work – assessing proposals, making the (unfortunately necessary) acceptance/rejection decisions, communicating with all participants involved, and finally creating the preliminary program and the conference schedule.

It is with great pleasure that we can announce that **the 2018 conference will be the largest one organized by the SRS!** According to our conference statistics, as many as 435 participants representing 27 countries have confirmed their participation in the Bucharest event next June. Romanian scholars are the most numerous – 280 (168 from Bucharest and 112 from outside the capital). We will welcome 56 scholars from the USA, 21 from the UK, 13 from Germany, 11 from Hungary, 9 from Canada, 6 each from Ireland and France, 5 from Italy, and 4 from Moldova. More scholars will join us from Bulgaria, Denmark, Austria, the Netherlands, Turkey, Belgium, Serbia, Russia, Greece, Sweden, Slovenia, Spain, Georgia, Australia, Spain, China, Japan, and Taiwan. Participants will be coming from the humanities and social sciences – political science, history, literature, economics, sociology, anthropology, and law. They will include 331 university professors, affiliated researchers, archivists and librarians, 89 graduate students, 12 independent scholars, a lawyer, a human rights activist, and a film director.

The fact that the 2018 conference will be the largest SRS conference ever is a sign of the interest in, and the vibrancy of Romanian Studies today. It is our hope that this conference will generate major

impulses via lively presentations, discussions, and collaborations – within and across disciplines and interests – and thus, will move Romanian Studies even further forward.

As the Organizing Committee, we take this opportunity to thank publicly all submitters for their interest and the time they took to formulate proposals. As the conference statistics attest, difficult choices had to be made in the end and we hope that those whose proposals were rejected still know that they are part of the Romanian Studies community (and if they were not members already, we hope that they have since joined SRS). We thank all participants for their conference registration, and for their continuing commitment to making the 2018 conference a distinctive event. A very special thank you is due to our two keynote speakers, Katherine Verdery and Vintilă Mihăilescu, who in many ways represent the scholarly richness and innovative quality of Romanian Studies today.

The Organizing Committee will continue to communicate with participants, finalize the program, and provide necessary updates and additional information, including via web announcement.

More information on the 2018 conference, including preliminary program, schedule, and all updates can be found [here](#).

Dr. F. Peter WAGNER

Message for SRS Conference Participants

We are very excited about the upcoming international conference in Bucharest, June 26-30, 2018 at the Academy of Economic Studies/Academia de Studii Economice (ASE), the largest conference SRS has ever organized. The preliminary schedule and program are already available on the SRS [website](#). We are constantly updating the conference information on that webpage, so please check it regularly!

You can help make the event a success by checking your responsibilities as paper presenters, chairs, and discussants. We appreciate your full attention to these detailed guidelines:

Responsibilities of Conference Participants

The Organizing Committee has agreed on the following list of responsibilities for all participants prior to and at the SRS conference of 26-30 June 2018. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with this document well before the start of the conference.

Chairs

The chair is responsible for monitoring the panel. The success of a panel often depends upon the chair's ability to restrict the length of speakers' presentations and to manage questions from the floor.

Some of the most important responsibilities of the chair are to:

- ♣ Inquire, on behalf of discussants and other paper-givers, about the status and expected completion date of late papers (June 12)
- ♣ Acquaint him/herself with the content of the papers
- ♣ Arrive early at the session and arrange with all participants the order of the speakers and time limits: normally, 15 - 20 minutes for paper presentations, and 10 minutes for discussants' comments
- ♣ Start the session at the scheduled time with a brief presentation of the theme of the session and (if possible) the links among the papers
- ♣ Introduce the participants (names and institutional affiliations)
- ♣ Maintain strict time limits for each speaker and discussant
- ♣ Moderate panel or floor discussions
- ♣ Adjourn the session in time to allow the room to clear before the next session begins

Chairs are requested to report to the conference registration desk the name(s) of anyone who does not show up for a session (presenter or discussant).

Discussants

Discussants are to prepare, in advance, appropriate critical commentaries on the significance and contribution of the papers presented in a session.

Some of the most important responsibilities of the discussants are to:

- ♣ Arrive early at the panel to take part in informal discussions about the order of the presentations and time limits
- ♣ Restrict his/her remarks to 10 minutes
- ♣ Situate his/her remarks in a context broad enough to spark questions and stir the interest of an audience that typically may not have read the paper

The following are suggested guidelines for discussants' remarks:

- (1) Given that the audience may not have read the papers it is helpful to begin by reviewing the major thrust of the papers, identifying their stronger or more interesting features;
- (2) Focus the discussion on the papers' major arguments;
- (3) Indicate whether the arguments are compelling;
- (4) State the basic merits and limits of each of the papers;
- (5) Conclude by stating linkages between the panel's papers.

In consultation with the panel Chair, the discussant may decline to discuss any paper that is received late (thereby leaving insufficient time to prepare an acceptable critique of it).

Paper Presenters*The responsibilities of presenters are to:*

- ♣ Provide copies of their papers/extended summary to all of the other participants in their session by June 12 at the latest (e-mail addresses will be available in the program). Failure to do this will likely result in the chair excluding the presentation from the session. Further, the discussant is under no obligation to comment on a paper s/he has not previously seen. This would be a loss to all attending the session. A PDF or Word copy/extended summary of the paper must be sent to the panel chair, the discussant(s), and the other participants.

- ♣ Arrive early at the session to take part in informal discussions about the order of and time limits of paper presentations (ordinarily 15 to 20 minutes are set aside for each presenter).
- ♣ Prepare comments outlining the major points of their papers. A good presentation is a must for a successful session.

The following are guidelines for preparing an oral summary of a paper (usually 15-20 minutes):

(1) No paper should ever be read verbatim. Such presentations are dull and incomplete due to time constraints imposed by the chair; an author may be cut off by the chair before reaching the most significant aspects of the presentation.

(2) Highlights of the paper should be presented, covering such points as the purpose of the study, the method of analysis, the major findings, and any conclusions or recommendations. The amount of time devoted to each of these may depend on the author's evaluation of the importance of each area related to the paper. Inexperienced speakers are advised to prepare a "reading text" of approximately 5 typed pages.

Final Comments

The SRS will not publish conference proceedings. Paper presenters are therefore encouraged to seek other venues of publication for their work. At the same time, the SRS invites conference presenters to upgrade and update their presentations for submission to its own peer-reviewed *Journal of Romanian Studies*, which will be launched in 2019. Please contact the *JRS* editors for inquiries and submissions: Lavinia Stan (lstan@stfx.ca) and Margaret Beissinger (mhbeissi@Princeton.edu).

Call for Submissions: 2018 SRS Graduate Student Essay Prize

The Society for Romanian Studies is pleased to announce the **Tenth Annual Graduate Student Essay Prize competition** for an outstanding unpublished essay or thesis chapter. The submitted single-author work must be in English, written by a graduate student in any social science or humanities discipline; and the work must be on a Romanian subject, broadly and inclusively understood.

This year, with an earlier deadline than in previous competitions, we look forward to being able to award the prize, consisting of \$300, at the Society for Romanian Studies Conference to be held in Bucharest, June 26–30.

The competition is open to current M.A. and doctoral students or to those who defended dissertations in the academic year 2017–18. The submitted work should have been completed during the 2017–18 academic year. If the essay is a dissertation chapter, it should be accompanied by the dissertation abstract and table of contents. Essays/chapters should be approximately 10,000 words, double-spaced, including reference matter. Expanded versions of conference papers are also acceptable if accompanied by a description of the panel and the candidate's conference paper proposal. Candidates should clearly indicate the format of the essay submitted.

Please send a copy of the essay and the accompanying documentation (in both Word and PDF versions) and an updated CV to (srsessay@gmail.com). Members of this year's committee are Jennifer CASH, Marina CAP-BUN, and R. Chris DAVIS. If you have questions, contact the chair of the committee, Jennifer CASH, at cashjennifer10@gmail.com.

*Submissions must be sent no later than **May 21, 2018**.*

Journal of Romanian Studies Call for Manuscripts

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

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Radu CINPOEȘ (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. Several manuscripts from leading scholars in the field have been reviewed and prepared for publication. Do you have a manuscript on a Romanian Studies topic? Please help strengthen the field and our Society by proposing it for publication in the JRS!

SUBMISSIONS:

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, religion, 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 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 2019.

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 in our series! You can nominate the work of a colleague or former student, or present us your own book already published abroad. We also welcome and hope to publish in the series book manuscripts written directly in Romanian. You can find details about what needs to be included in a book proposal [here](#).

The series publishes scholarly books in Romanian authored or edited by SRS members. The Editors 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; and 3) edited collections of essays dealing with a Romanian Studies theme.

Books in the SRS Romanian Studies series are about Romania and/or Moldova, about the populations living on these territories, and about the Romanian and Moldovan diasporas and cultures. 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 bibliography. We prefer contributions that are free of jargon and thus more likely to appeal to a wide audience. All proposals, manuscripts, and books offered for translation will be carefully reviewed for publication in the series.

Titles published in the Series to date:

- ♣ Cristina VĂȚULESCU, *Cultură și poliție secretă în communism* (2017)
- ♣ Lavinia STAN și Diane VANCEA, eds., *România postcomunistă: trecut, prezent, viitor* (2017)
- ♣ Alex DRACE-FRANCIS, *Geneza culturii române moderne. Instituțiile scrisului și dezvoltarea identității naționale, 1700-1900* (2016)
- ♣ Vladimir SOLONARI, *Purificarea națiunii: dislocări forțate de populație și epurări etnice în România lui Ion Antonescu, 1940-1944* (2015)
- ♣ Roland CLARK, *Sfântă tinerețe legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică* (2015) **WINNER OF THE 2017 SRS BOOK AWARD**



Recent publications:

The most recent book in our series is Cristina Văţulescu's highly acclaimed *Cultură și poliție secretă în comunism*, translated by Cornelia Marinescu (2017).

**The English language edition received several laudatory reviews:**

"In this fascinating and ambitious study, Cristina Văţulescu examines secret-police files, surveillance methods, and interrogation techniques in the Soviet era, and the impact of resulting "police aesthetics" on writers and films directors. Like a good mystery novelist, Văţulescu draws us into rooms forbidden to the average reader – courtrooms, interrogation rooms, and secret police archives – creating an image of Soviet culture that is at odds, as herself asserts, with easy binary oppositions. Instead, she presents us with a complex network of imagery and associations that underlies texts from the Soviet period, ranging from police files to underground novels." Eric Laursen, *Slavic and East European Journal*

"Văţulescu's outstanding book focuses on the fate of the unregimented creative intelligentsia in Stalin's Russia and Stalinized Romania, the interplay between artistic creation and police supervision, coercion, and persecution. Drawing from secret police archives in Russia and Romania, this superbly researched and original book captures the tragic destinies of major artists caught at what Lionel Trilling called the bloody crossroads where politics and literature meet. [...] As Văţulescu demonstrates, secret police files were the hidden counterpart to real biographies and genuine creations. They were constructed counter-narratives inspired by the official demonology." Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*

**Forthcoming:**

In the first half of 2018 Polirom will publish the Romanian translation of Maria Bucur's *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth Century Romania* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010). Two other books, a translation of Diana Dumitru's *The State, Antisemitism, and Collaboration in the Holocaust: The Borderlands of Romania and the Soviet Union* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), and one of Manele in Romania: *Cultural Expression and Social Meaning in Balkan Popular Music* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), edited by Margaret Beissinger, Speranța Rădulescu and Anca Giurchescu, are under preparation by Polirom.

Prospective authors:

If you plan to submit a manuscript for the SRS-Polirom book series or if you have a general interest in the series, we encourage you to contact the editors during the **2018 Annual Conference of the Society for Romanian Studies** hosted by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) June 26 – 30, 2018. The preliminary program of the conference can be accessed [here](#). You're invited to attend the **Roundtable on the SRS-Polirom book series** on June 26 to find out more about the submission and selection of manuscripts, the publication process, and the experience of authors whose books have already appeared in the series.

Vote Now!

The 2018 SRS Board election is open to members for voting between **1 April** and **15 April 2018**. The Society is committed to membership participation in governance and to diversity in leadership. We strongly encourage you to vote. This election is for members of the Board Class of 2022.

CANDIDATES:

Mariana CAP-BUN, Ovidius University, Constanța, Romania
Cătălina FLORESCU, Pace University, New York, USA
James KAPALÓ, University College Cork, Ireland
Marius WAMSIEDEL, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China
Rodica ZAHARIA, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

For more details click [here](#).

To **VOTE**, click [here](#).

Gender Equality or Gender Inequality? A Stringent Choice for States, Political Parties, and Civil Society Actors

Dr. Oana BĂLUȚĂ, Associate Professor for the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies at the University of Bucharest

The little girl called Alice came to a fork in the road of Wonderland where she saw a Cheshire cat in a tree. She asked which road to take. The cat enquired more about the destination, and since Alice did not know much, the cat said it just would not matter which road Alice took. But it always matters which path we choose. And so, when we come to a fork in the road, it is important for us to know where we are, from whence we have come, and where we wish to go.

In 2007, when Romania became a European Union member state, and long after, feminist NGOs, women's rights civil society actors, and a few scholars believed that the country had finally embarked on a road towards gender equality. However, according to the most recent European Gender Equality Index, Romania ranks low in the EU, with 52.4 points; only Hungary and Greece ranked lower than Romania. The Index measures gaps between men and women regarding work, money, knowledge, time, power, health, violence, and intersecting inequalities. And the gaps in Romania remain very large in virtually every domain. Whether gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, healthcare, the development of social infrastructure to support work-life balance, etc. — women remain second-class citizens, ill-served by public policy. Despite substantial legislative changes, the implementation and monitoring process lags. There is thus a great urgency that the ruling political parties develop better gender-based public policies and make sure that the legislative provisions are actually implemented.

It is difficult for me, as a scholar and a feminist activist, to understand the negligence of decision makers in the field of sexual and reproductive rights. Romania has the highest number of girls under 15 who become mothers. Its fertility rate is nine times higher than the European average. In countries where sexual education is part of the curriculum (the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden), precocious fertility is almost absent. Throughout Europe, sexual education and sexual health are

treated seriously, but in Romania a Social Democrat MP proposed legislation forbidding pre-university teachers to discuss sexual education without the parents' written approval. Teachers who do educate face jail time or pay a substantial fine; and the Chamber of Deputies debates this anti-intellectual and punitive proposal as if it represents a rational response of a modern government to the challenges of public health.

Romania has the highest incidence of cervical cancer and the highest rate of mortality due to cervical cancer in the EU. According to Eurostat data, the number of deaths caused by breast cancer has slightly increased over time. There is an acute need to implement national screening programs, support public campaigns, and disseminate information about root causes of cervical/breast cancer and prevention strategies. Particular attention should be given to vulnerable women and women from ethnic minorities, especially Roma, due to the intersecting inequalities they experience.

We witness the emergence of an anti-gender equality project in Europe with different forms of opposition ranging from social conservatism to religious fundamentalist actors. A transnational coalition opposes the Istanbul Convention, as the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence is known. This document highlights that violence against women, a form of gender-based violence, must be opposed. Bulgaria and Croatia have been divided over the ratification of the Convention. Romania signed the document in 2014 and ratified it two years later. Yet in 2017, Romania was convicted by the European Court of Human Rights for failing to hold to account a man who attacked his wife. The Convention stirred no major opposition in 2014, but conservative religious groups have recently criticized the Convention's emphasis on gender, although one Council of Europe statement dispelled the misconceptions about gender that are behind much of this controversy.

In the face of this anti-Convention campaign, the #Metoo movement is challenging the silence surrounding violence against women that is all too prevalent in Romania. I understand #Metoo as both a consciousness-raising and a protest movement that reveals the prevalence of gender-based violence inside the sanctity of homes, outside in the public sphere, on the streets, in the workplace, in public transportation, and throughout society. #Metoo is participatory, personal, and political. It is raising fundamental questions about who has access to public spaces, and how much freedom women have. It highlights once again that consensual interaction is mandatory in a world rooted in respect for personal dignity. Such collective action, supported by many and despised by others, empowers survivors of violence to reclaim their voice and demand to be heard, women to seek the equal treatment they deserve, and all citizens to take seriously the civic equality that is at the heart of constitutional democracy.

Romania is not an oasis of gender justice or gender equality. In light of the illiberal trends that overtake some democracies, and the poor response of major parties to gender equality issues, we faced today some stark choices: gender equality within the framework of the EU and the Istanbul Convention or gender inequality? If Romania chooses the first, it will join the community of modern nations. If it chooses the latter, it will become an outlier and a pariah. To do nothing is to choose the latter. We deserve better.

Get to Know Our Scholars

*Dr. Cristina PETRESCU, Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, Bucharest
(Interview by Cristina Plămădeală and Ana Fumurescu)*

SRS: You are an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Bucharest. Tell us a bit about yourself and your academic career.

CP: My background is in the comparative history of East-Central Europe. I was unable and unwilling to study the humanities or the social sciences before 1989. Romania's communist regime denied admission to such programs to young people with a "bad file" (my family fled Bessarabia in 1944). Official history teaching was highly ideological. Thus, I opted for a less ideological engineering degree. After 1989, I decided together with my colleague from the Polytechnic University, Dragoș Petrescu, to study history. We enrolled in the undergraduate history program at the University of Bucharest, and then in a Master's program in comparative history at the Central European University (CEU), at a time when Hungary was a model of democratization. Eventually, we both earned doctoral degrees from CEU. When we were there, CEU was a great place and truly multicultural. It is the respect for alterity and diversity that we most cherish from our Budapest experience. This experience in Budapest greatly shaped our academic careers in Political Science, which we both pursued after the completion of our studies at CEU.



SRS: What personal or professional experiences inspired your interest in identity and memory in Communist and post-Communist Romania?

CP: The best students in the Faculty of History studied the recent past because there was much to learn from it and Romanians had to reclaim their "true" history after decades of official lies. We soon learned, however, that there is no "true" history, only different versions of the past. The focus on communism and its legacies allowed us to join the newly established Department of Political Science at the University of Bucharest; it needed individuals who could teach in English to a growing number of students. We also engaged in the study of communism to understand our own recent past, and focused on the memory of that past among Romanians who experienced communism. This was a unique opportunity to use our own experiences of communism to study its memory and to use research on this subject to better understand our generation, which was still in school at the time of the regime change. We were the first cohort to start careers in the early transition with the hope of "changing the world." Compared to our elders, we adapted to a changing social life for which nobody prepared us. Compared to those younger than us, we had experienced the communist regime and learned the fundamental difference between a democratic and a non-democratic regime. The dual experience of the end of communism and the beginning of democracy shaped our memories and collective identity. In short, research on the memory of communism helped us to better understand who we are: former children of Ceaușescu's national-communism and current builders of democracy in Romania.

SRS: Communism seems to be a clearer notion than post-Communism. When does post-Communism stop, in your opinion?

CP: For some, transition ends once a post-communist country joins the European Union. This view originated in the 1989 revolution: “Return to Europe!” Another view, bluntly voiced in 1990 by Silviu Brucan, claimed that transition requires the passing of the generation perverted by communism. However, undesirable patterns of thinking can reproduce themselves across generations, so younger generations can be even worse-off than their predecessors.

Political science measures democratic consolidation with variables, so some authors claim the transition is over, while others claim that it is not. The ambiguity of this approach was best formulated in 1990 by Lord Ralf Dahrendorf, who said something along these lines: six months to organize free elections, six years to establish a market economy, and sixty years to build civil society. For decades, Hungary and Poland seemed far ahead of Romania in the transition to democracy. Today Romania looks like a bastion of Europeanization by comparison. Thus, I cannot say when post-communism stops, but I can say that it has not.

SRS: With the recent passing of King Michael and the upcoming centenary of the Romanian “Great Union,” there seems to be a renewed nostalgia for monarchy among some segments of contemporary Romanian society. Do you think the legacy of Communism has lost some of its ability to shape Romanian self-perceptions today?

CP: The popular reaction to the recent death of King Michael is a symbolic farewell to a past that will never return because there is neither the social will, nor the practical possibility of restoring the monarchy. Even the nostalgia for the interwar period is insignificant, just as popular interest in the Republic of Moldova is not high. The celebrations of the centenary are generally inconspicuous. We see in Moldova a surprising movement from below in favour of union with Romania, but this is a future-oriented endeavour, not an expression of nostalgia for the past.

SRS: In your opinion, is there a disconnect between academic discourses on the Communist legacy and how this legacy is presented in Romanian public schools?

CP: The school curricula do not cover the legacy of communism. Textbooks include just sketchy reconstructions of the communist period. There is no disconnect between the mainstream academic discourses on the communist past and the coverage of that period in textbooks. Both focus on communist repression and condemn its crimes. This view underpins democratic consolidation by highlighting differences between a democracy based on the rule of law, and a dictatorship that imprisoned innocent people. To learn what democracy is means to recognize what it is not, and detect derailment from the path to democratic consolidation.

However, delivery of school curricula depends on teachers, who can transmit different messages that reflect their own experiences and memories of communism. Thus, knowledge of communism acquired in school or family might be disconnected from the professional reconstructions of the past presented in academic writings and textbooks. Teachers or parents might transmit to generations that never experienced communism a conflicting message that depends not on the way they once experienced communism, but on their memories of that time, which are influenced by their experience of post-communist transition. The more painful the transition, the happier the memories of the pre-1989 period. These selective memories of the past — an alleged social security, an illusory better education or medical care, or a presumed lower crime rate — imply that some aspects of life

were better before 1989. Some young people, whose chances of social and professional success are grim, buy into these memories. The disconnect between historical writings and personal memories exists also because the former do not fully integrate the latter. Most historical writings hardly illustrate that people who never experienced repression perceived the communist regime in neutral or even positive terms because it increased their living standard by moving them from village to city. As long as these experiences are not integrated in the narrative on the communist past, the disconnect between history and memory will continue to disorient the young generation.

SRS: Much of your work has looked at dissent and resistance in Communist Romania. What lessons should those protesting government corruption today draw from your findings?

CP: I have researched this topic for many years in both my doctoral dissertation, which became a book, and in subsequent work. More recently, I joined an international project funded by the European Union in the Horizon 2020 program. Our goal is to build a digital database of collections that preserve material or digital traces of “cultural opposition in the former socialist countries.” What does cultural opposition mean? The concept illustrates a turn in the years 2000 in the study of communist-era dissent and opposition, which switched the focus from political to cultural aspects, and from political science to cultural studies.

The results of this project, whose acronym is COURAGE, represent a lesson for the young generation. In Romania, there is a related term, “resistance through culture,” which was a form of defying the communist regime limited to high culture and public intellectuals. As National Task Manager in Romania and Moldova, I define cultural opposition more broadly: any form of critical thinking or action independent from the value system imposed by the communist regime in a given moment, considering the changing nature of the official views. Our methodologically innovative approach involves the study of collections that preserve evidence of thoughts or actions which conflicted with the ideas promoted and imposed by the regime. Moreover, cultural opposition includes a wide range of activities which take into account a broader definition of culture, including shared meanings and practices in almost all aspects of everyday life. Finally, cultural opposition is defined dynamically, since individuals living under a dictatorship could one day be tolerated and another repressed, subject to the whims of those in power and the changes in their value system.

We discovered previously unknown groups and persons who created cultural artifacts, grey literature, photographic material, and audio records, demonstrating their refusal of the value system and behavioral norms imposed by the regime. This was a daily resistance carried out by “common” individuals who were neither heroes, like the dissidents, nor opportunists, like those who muddled through. Most became silent agents of the transition to democracy. What is the lesson to be drawn here? Street protests are important, but democracy is built daily by a multitude of individuals who seek not to be heroes, but to make change. Young people would much more effectively fight corruption by engaging on a daily basis against this parasitical system than by protesting once in a while against it.

Dr. Stefano Bottoni, Senior Research Fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

(Interview by Cristina Plămădeală and Ana Fumurescu)

SRS: Tell us a bit about yourself.

SB: I was born in Bologna in 1977. My father was an Italian bank employee, my mother a German-teacher who moved there from Hungary several years before my birth. My mother always spoke to me in Hungarian even in the street, and I remember very well that at a certain point I got fed up with this, and started answering in Italian. My microcosm was thus split between monoculturalism (being a good standard Italian boy), and the – at that time – vague and somehow uncomfortable notion of cultural difference. Since the late 1970s, I spent about a month a year in Hungary during the summer, and had the opportunity to get some first-hand feelings about what the socialist world looked like. I think that this essential package of grassroots “real socialism” has played an outstanding role in making me interested in history and more precisely in postwar Eastern Europe and the Soviet-type world. When I started studying history in my native town, I did it with the moral imperative of understanding and then explaining how communism worked; this is how I became a professional historian. As far as my research track is concerned, I obtained my PhD in History at the University of Bologna. I am currently team member of the EU/Horizon-funded international project “COURAGE” on the cultural opposition in Eastern Europe under state socialism, coordinated by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and whose Romanian partner is the University of Bucharest under the direction of Cristina Petrescu.



SRS: How did your interest in Eastern Europe, and in Romania more specifically, arise?

SB: I discovered Romania and Romanian studies in a very accidental way. When I had to decide the topic of my MA dissertation, one of my professors suggested to me to choose Eastern Europe and Hungary, since I could speak that “secret” language. This is how I got the seminal idea of writing a comparative analysis of the political, social, and legal condition of the Hungarian minority communities in Central and Eastern Europe between 1944 and 1950. How did I physically discover Romania? I took my first trip there in January 2000. I was doing field research and collecting press materials on the Hungarian minority in Romania after 1944, and I spent a week travelling from Oradea to Cluj, and then to the Székely Land, Miercurea Ciuc, and Odorheiu Secuiesc. I immediately fell in love with the whole situation, even if Romania in that period was probably 20-30 years behind Hungary in terms of the material condition of the country. It was that kind of cultural shock that boosted my interest toward this country not only as a researcher of Hungarian minorities, but toward Romania “as such,” toward the fascinating story of how this country was driven under the communist regime to become a “modern,” “industrial,” and ethnically more homogenous country.

SRS: Your recently published book, *Long Awaited West* (Indiana University Press, 2017) has an intriguing image on its cover: a barbed wire fence with a semi-opened door oriented towards a green pasture. We assume that this image represents a metaphor for the way in which your book treats the evolution of eastern European history starting with the end of the Second World War until today. Tell us a bit about this book, its key findings. What compelled you to write it?

SB: I wrote this book to provide students and scholars interested in getting a sense of the somber, often controversial, and indeed very fascinating history of Eastern Europe since the end of the Second World War with an updated synthesis, and also to stimulate further academic debate and research on the long-term consequences of the turning point represented by the collapse of the Soviet Bloc after 1989. The book reflects on the double illusion that the part of Europe that we arbitrarily call “Eastern Europe” has shared since 1944: the illusion of an external redemptory intervention, and more recently, the collective faith in the fast convergence with the living standard of the (West) European core countries. I offer in it a comparative outlook of the entangled political and social history of Eastern Europe since World War II to the present day, combining a chronological with a thematic and transnational approach. I argue in this book that the common heritage of a traumatic past and a problematic present is probably the only deep connection the Soviet Union was able to create between its reluctant satellites. In the last chapter, I also raise the point of whether the post-1989 regime changes throughout the region can be regarded as definitive, or whether the Russian-backed ongoing “illiberal” turn in several countries amid the economic turmoil following the 2008 global crisis might signal a backlash against the Westernization process of an area which has remained a periphery of the Western world.

SRS: In your view, when did the “line” between “Eastern” and “Western” Europe develop and how has it changed, if at all, over the course of the last century? Do you think this divide can be overcome?

SB: It would be impossible to give a comprehensive answer in a few sentences, but I think that this answer should take into account the internal differences within the fragmented historical space we usually call “Eastern Europe.” If we examine the theoretical and historiographical debate from T. G. Masaryk to Oskar Halecki, and from Jenő Szűcs to Václav Havel, Czesław Miłosz, and György Konrád, we would find as a common point their strong belief in an autonomous political, social, and even cultural space for those countries that entered into contact with Western civilization from the Middle Ages onwards, even if they mostly failed to integrate into the Western political and business community, and became nation-states much later than the core countries of Western Europe. The “Eastern Europe” I describe in my book represents the fruit of a pragmatic definition of the region as the ensemble of territories Stalin and his epigones militarily conquered or influenced from 1939 until the end of the Cold War. From this perspective, it was the Soviet political-military bloc, which emerged in the late 1940s, that created Eastern Europe through a new discourse that validated the differences between Western and Eastern Europe on the basis on the existence of irreconcilable conflicts between the “two halves” of the continent.

SRS: In the fall of 2017, you published an interesting article in the *Journal of Cold War Studies* about the “ethnicized state violence and population control in Ceaușescu's Romania.” What are its main conclusions?

SRS: I hope that this research, which I would like to develop into a monograph, shows how critical was the role of both physical and psychological violence performed by the state security apparatus

in the peculiar context of communist-era Romanian nation-building. We cannot understand present-day political convulsions and social upheavals if we do not explore the brutality of the political culture the Securitate and other repressive bodies quite successfully transmitted to the post-1989 elites.

SRS: What advice would you give to emerging scholars interested in this region?

SB: Be brave, open-minded, and unconventional.

SRS: This year marks the centenary of Romania's "Great Union." What lessons should we take away from the past hundred years?

SB: There are many ways to celebrate such an anniversary. As a scholar specializing in the social history of the Hungarian minority of Transylvania, I would have preferred, of course, a more self-reflective approach to the event as far as the non-Romanian populations are concerned. Over the last decades, the country has lost its undeniable multinational and multicultural character. This did not happen by accident, but as the result of a long-term nationalization policy that started immediately after the First World War, getting radical and then genocidal during the Second World War, and continuing despite any ideological differences after 1945 and especially after 1958, when the Romanian communist regime implemented the ethnic recasting of elites by supporting the mass emigration of Germans, Jews, and, to a lesser extent, Hungarians. A long-desired ethnic homogenization has been almost accomplished and even the Hungarians will fall below the critical threshold of 1 million within a few years. This country is now more "Romanian" than ever, but also incomparably poorer in terms of cultural diversity and genuine multiculturalism than the Greater Romania that came into being after 1918. The national-communism of the late Ceaușescu era and its ideological drivers still inform most of the public discourse of the current celebrations. The second aspect which makes me critical about the celebratory mood is the failure to address the most important issues at stake: the dramatic lack of social cohesion between a dozen technologically developed, culturally sophisticated big cities and the desperate situation of the Romanian countryside. Romania as a social community remains a painfully unaccomplished project.

SRS Mentoring Program

SRS launched a new mentoring program last 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 abroad whose primary supervisors are not themselves specialists in Romania and Moldova. Similarly, students and scholars based in Eastern Europe may 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, access to 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

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#45for45

Dr. Anca ȘINCAN, Visiting Lecturer in History, Central European University

45 for 45 is a series of interviews that will appear throughout 2018 in LaPunkt, a well-known cultural blog published in Bucharest and on the SRS website. In 2018 we mark a double anniversary, as the Society for Romanian Studies celebrates 100 years from the birth of the modern Romanian state, and 45 years since the Society was created by a group of American graduate students, professors, and Romanian émigrés.

This series of interviews, coordinated by Dr. Anca Șincan, showcases 45 junior and senior academics who are working in Western universities, centers, or institutes and have devoted their research to the field of Romanian Studies, broadly conceived. These conversations will allow Romanian audiences not only to discover the personal biographies and research itineraries of these 45 academics, but also to gain insight into the life decisions that have led these academics to choose Romania as their main research subject. As the interviews will reveal, influential professors, chance encounters, early-life visits, family ties, emigration, and so many other reasons have contributed to their decisions to focus on Romania. This is a new generation of specialists in Romanian Studies, the post-Cold War generation, which supports the Society for Romanian Studies and its important role in making Romanian Studies visible in Western academia.

So far, these candid interviews have shared the difficulties and rewards of being Romanian studies specialists. Interviews with Lavinia STAN, James KAPALÓ, Roland CLARK, Cristian TILEAGĂ, Svetlana SUVEICĂ, Lucian LEUȘTEAN, Lucian TURCESCU, Stefano BOTTONI, Vladimir SOLONARI, Chris DAVIS, and Delia POPESCU are but the start of this year-long endeavor. By expounding on their life and academic work, we also hope to familiarize the Romanian public with the Society for Romanian Studies in advance of the June 2018 conference.

The Still-Changing Romanian Diaspora

Bogdan VOICU, Senior researcher, The Romanian Academy

The Romanian diaspora sends remittances back home, receives positive or negative coverage in international media, and votes in ways that bother politicians. In its name, Romanian governments have created ministries and agencies whose activity is difficult to check, whose missions are unclear, and whose efficiency is not easy to assess. Public debates on the diaspora stress, on the one hand, its merits in sending back home approximately 3 billion Euro as yearly remittance, and, on the other hand, its negative input in reducing the size of the population residing in Romania and in stirring political squabbles around voting rights. The diaspora's deeper contribution to Romanian society takes the form of subtler and longer-term social and political impacts. One of them is voting. Analysts claimed that the diaspora decided the outcome of two of the three most recent elections, but a study I co-authored with Dragoș Radu showed that the diaspora vote had a negligible effect on the 2014 elections, except in rural localities outside the Carpathians where it influenced the election outcome by not voting for Victor Ponta.

Social remittances go beyond politics. In general, the Romanian diaspora is not highly skilled, but is more skilled than the Romanians left behind. A better educated and wealthier diaspora can influence those who are left behind, especially in a traditional society like Romania. The transnational context provides instant communication over Internet, satellite TV, mobile phone, and low-cost carriers, all of which connect migrants with their friends and relatives back home. Tradition makes such relationships imbalanced. This is a looser transformation of the mixed diffused household, which Vintilă Mihăilescu described in the 1990s to show the ties of urban families with their rural roots. In the redefined transnational household, joint decisions are uncommon due to distance, but relate to key financial aspects and are based on a continuous transfer of values and norms from the society of destination to the society of origin. Romanian migrants transfer practices and behaviors that compete with economic growth in transforming society and the lives of younger and older generations. Exposure to Western culture could lead to modernization of the family, religious and work values, as well as civic and political participation.

The process of "learning" from the diaspora is challenged by three factors. First, most non-migrant Romanians view migrants and migration negatively for weakening the country and even something amounting to treason. Second, the rule that a minor cannot leave Romania unless both parents are present or the missing parent provides a letter of consent restrains youth mobility and prevents individuals born outside of Romania from assuming a Romanian identity. Third, the influx of

immigrants into Romania may affect connections with emigrants (seen as the cause for such influx) unless the Romanian immigration law becomes more permissible to newcomers. Such processes will redefine the role of the diaspora with its country of origin.

Cultures of History

Dr. Valeska BOPP-FILIMONOV, Junior Professor of Romance Studies, Friedrich Schiller University

(Interview by Ana Fumurescu and Cristina Plămădeală)

SRS: You are a professor of Romance Studies, with a focus on Romanian Studies, at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität, Jena. Tell us a bit about how your interest in Romania arose.

VPF: Having grown up in West Germany, I went to study in Leipzig and there my interest in the societies and history of Eastern and Southeastern Europe arose. Very soon I knew I wanted to travel further “east,” but I did not quite know yet exactly where to. I consulted a professor and we literally scrolled through an atlas. I saw Moscow, but the distance was frightening to me at that time! He asked about my language skills, and because I was quite good in French, he said: Then maybe Romania.... I went to live for a while in Bucharest, working as an intern at the Goethe Institute and sharing an old-fashioned bourgeois apartment with my landlady. That was in 2000 and after that I came back very often. A few years later, I did visit Moscow and learned Russian, something that may come in handy as I intend to also integrate research on Moldova’s society into my work.



SRS: What, in your view, is Romania’s place in “Europe”? How has this perceived position affected, if at all, the prominence of Romanian Studies in academia outside of Romania’s national borders?

VPF: I don’t want to qualify Romania’s place in Europe. In order to give you a good answer, I would need to invent a new discourse, which involves a good deal of work! As a member state of the EU, Romania is considered by many as the European periphery. Moreover, the “success story” of Romania’s accession to the EU is often immediately qualified by pointing to the still existing deficits, which make the country appear like a second-class member. This is an incredibly annoying discourse, dominant in the so-called “West.” One rarely hears or reads anything interesting and new about, for example, Romania’s creative and sharp-sighted intellectual and artistic scene or about the everyday life of the urban civil society. We may not have a poor countryside anymore, at least not in Germany, but images of Romanian rural life are shown regularly in the German media and they shape our view of Romania. We forget to see a lot of other things, things that are similar in both countries. Also, the historical entanglements of Romania, especially with countries like Germany and France, are profound, but the general public knows so little about them.

Concerning academia: German universities do not invest much in the field of Romanian Studies and we must be glad that Institutul Limbii Române finances lecturers (“Sprachlektoren”) so that students at a few universities in Germany can learn the language with a native speaker and get insights from a local on Romania’s history and society. However, some outstanding German linguists have retired and their professorships have not been extended, at least not to their full extent. The few remaining scholars are spread across various disciplines: they work in history, political science, or language departments and are sometimes difficult to keep track of. I am glad to participate now in SRS and hope more European researchers will do so; research results would become visible more quickly and relations would improve. Current cultural and political phenomena in Romania could do with much more explanation, and of course it would be desirable if German federal politics would invest more in the field of Romanian studies at our universities – not least in order to free Romania from the status of an “exotic Balkan EU” state.

SRS: The upcoming centenary of the “Great Union” has invited academics and the public alike to reflect more deeply on Romanian historical memory. In what direction would you like to see Romanian Studies head going forward? What old issues do you feel still need to be grappled with, and what new concerns should the field address?

VPF: I am not sure that the events around the centenary will have long-term effects or even change the way Romania’s twentieth-century history is remembered, at least not yet. One must remember that the attempt to integrate alternative schoolbooks provoked much public debate, and now the Social Democrats in Romania are about to dispose of them (again!). It is not easy to introduce new historical views that challenge the national success story, in this case of the “Great Union.”

For the communist period, I am glad that a lot of traumatic events, such as the Romanian Holocaust, communist prisons, and the Securitate, are examined, quite thoroughly, and not only by “Western” scholars. This makes room for a shift to everyday history that I consider very important: Romanians need to find “their” story in the country’s history. The gap between the officially considered “bad” communism and every-day adaptations and living contexts for poor, rich, communists, partisans, ethnic minorities etc. – there is still a lot that is unexplained. But we should also look further back. I would be so happy, for example, for a few thick volumes of social history of the nineteenth and twentieth century with information on the economy, professions and work, childhood and education, and so on. This would greatly improve my seminars when trying to explain to my students the living conditions of certain periods.

SRS: In Jena there is an online publication, the Cultures of History Forum, which addresses issues of public memory in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. Could you explain to us what the forum is all about? Could it teach us something about Romania as well?

VPF: Yes, of course: Just recently, Monica Ciobanu wrote about the “**Prison Saints movement**” in Romania and the debates that surround [it](#). The main aim of the Cultures of History Forum is to provide informed insights into local, regional, and national debates about the past that are otherwise unknown to those who do not speak the local languages. This includes, obviously, public debates and controversies over divergent historical meanings, but also reviews of new exhibitions and discussions of recent laws and policy moves. The forum therefore wants to contribute to a transnational conversation on the contemporary meanings of the past for European societies. The Forum has built up quite a diverse (also non-scholarly) readership across the ECE region and the

editors are always looking for new topics and authors. So, to everyone reading this interview, please check our [website](#) – it is a great opportunity for those who want to share their insights about what's going on in Romania right now. I highly recommend it!

SRS: In what research projects are you currently involved?

VPF: Actually, I have just recently returned to academia after working in the science management sector, and I am therefore in the process of reorienting myself. I had previously worked intensively in the field of oral history and biographical research. I am still fascinated by this – not only the analysis of life-stories and how they correspond with communist-era realities, but also the effects of the often complicated and complex post-communist transition, and especially post-communist discourses on peoples' memories and biographical narratives. In my opinion, understanding peoples' individual perceptions, memories, and way(s) of coping with changes in their lives is essential for better understanding societies and (public) discourses as a whole. My next teaching units are about childhood in Romania – a topic developing in a variety of directions in Romania – and Romanian contemporary literature and its reflections on the communist period. Some other projects are currently in the making, but not yet ready for discussion. For now, I see my primary task as inspiring our students of Romance Studies and Southeastern European Studies. We recently organized Romanian Cultural Days here in Jena – a three-day event featuring lectures, literature readings, film, and dance – and we were happy to see quite a lot of people interested. Last month we also organized an excursion to the Leipzig Book Fair, as Romania is the focus country this year.

Member News

MEREDITH BACON (Emerita Professor of Political Science, University of Nebraska at Omaha) is spending her retirement researching the logic/illogic of the Romanian Orthodox Church's stand on officially recognizing the martyrdom of the so-called "prison saints," most of them former members of the Legion/Iron Guard.

ANA BAZAC (Professor of Philosophy, Politechnic University Bucharest) has translated and written an afterword for E. Moutsopoulos's *Conștiința intenționată* (Bucharest: Omonia, 2017).

MARGARET BIESSINGER (Research Scholar and Lecturer, Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, Princeton University) co-organized, together with Katherine Verdery and Keith Hitchins, the Symposium dedicated to the centenary of the 1918 union.

ROXANA CAZAN (Assistant Professor of English, Saint Francis University, PA.) has published a book of poems related to the refugee experience. Her collection, *The Accident of Birth* (2017), draws on her own experiences to reveal the complicated nature of immigration and refuge. An interview and oral excerpt of the book may be found [here](#).

STEPHEN J. CUTLER (Professor Emeritus of Sociology, University of Vermont) spent parts of the spring and fall semesters at the University of Bucharest in Romania teaching courses on

gerontological research methods. In March of 2017, he was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Bucharest.

CĂTĂLINA FLORINA FLORESCU (Professor of English, Pace University) has recently published *Teatru* (Bucharest: Editura Tracus Arte, 2018), as well as a collection entitled *Transnational Narratives in Englishes of Exile* (Lexington Books, 2017), co-edited with Dr. Sheng-Mei Ma (Michigan State University).

ALINA MUNGIU-PIPPIDI (Professor of Democracy Studies, Hertie School of Governance in Berlin) has written the foreword to a special issue (Volume 68, Issue 4) of the journal *Crime, Law and Social Change* (November 2017). Together with Ramin Dadašov, she also contributed the piece, "When do anticorruption laws matter? The evidence on public integrity enabling contexts," to the same journal.

BRUCE O'NEILL (Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Saint Louis University) co-edited with Marguerite van den Berg (University of Amsterdam) a special issue of *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* (Issue 78) entitled "Boredom after the global financial crisis." The volume includes an article by Bruce O'Neill about "*parcagii*" working around the Gara de Nord railway station. The article, "The ethnographic negative," can be found [here](#).

RYAN J. VOOGT (Lecturer in the Humanities, Lewis Honors College, UK) having completed his PhD in History at the University of Kentucky (UK), is now a Lecturer in the humanities at the Lewis Honors College of UK. His dissertation is entitled "Making Religion Acceptable in Communist Romania and the Soviet Union, 1943-1989.

LAVINIA STAN (Professor of Political Science, St. Francis Xavier University) recently co-edited, with Cynthia M. Horne, *Transitional Justice and the Former Soviet Union: Reviewing the Past and Looking Toward the Future* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). This volume, which is the first to explore reckoning and memory in the Former Soviet Union republics, includes a chapter on Armenia (authored by Oana Suciu). Stan is present in that book with a chapter on Moldova, and another one entitled "Limited Reckoning in the Former Soviet Union: Some Possible Explanations." Together with Răzvan Zaharia, Stan also co-authored the 2017 report on Romania for the *European Journal of Political Research*, the flagship political science scholarly journal in Europe. This is the twelfth peer-reviewed report they are writing for that journal.

LUCIAN TURCESCU (Professor of Theological Studies, Concordia University) and Lavinia Stan have obtained a contract for a book on *Church Reckoning with Communism in Post-1989 Romania*, to be published with Rowman & Littlefield in 2019. The volume will include chapters by SRS members Cristian Vasile, Oana Suciu, and Monica Ciobanu.

KATHERINE VERDERY (Julien J. Studley Faculty Scholar and Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York) was awarded *doctor honoris causa* by the University of Bucharest on Oct. 3, 2016, and by the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, on Oct. 12, 2017.

KATYA VLADIMIROV (Professor of History and Philosophy, Kennesaw State University) has had her article, "General Nicolae Rădescu: new sources, new perspectives, 1940s–1950s," accepted for publication by *The Journal of the Historical Association* (Fall/Winter 2018).

Member Publications

BAWD, Gavin. "Half-Trespasser, Half-Spectre": Patrick Leigh Fermor and Romania" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.

BUTOI, Ionuț. *Canonizare, demitizare, și realism științific*. Studii despre Mircea Vulcănescu. [Canonization, demythisation and scientific realism. Studies about Mircea Vulcanescu] Bucharest: Editura Eikon, 2017.

CIOBANU, Monica. "Criminals, Martyrs or Saints? Romania's Prison Saints Debate Revisited." *Cultures of History Forum* (19 February 2018).

_____. "Romania since 1989: Old Dilemmas, Present Challenges, Future Uncertainties" in Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane Curry, eds. *Central and East European Politics: From Communism to Democracy*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2018.

_____. "Romanian Communists Under Gheorghiu Dej: Legitimation before 1965 and Its Memory as Opposition to Ceaușescu" in Agnieszka Mrozik and Stanislav Holubec, eds. *Historical Memory of Central and East European Communism*. New York: Routledge Press, 2018.

CITIRIGĂ, Daniel. "The Arch Enemy: The Image of the Bulgarian in Romanian Memoirs and Propaganda during the First World War" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.

CUȘCO, Andrei. *A Contested Borderland: Competing Russian and Romanian Visions of Bessarabia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*. Budapest: CEU Press, 2017.

GROSS, Peter. *Dialogues on Journalism and Media*. Interview by Stefana Ciortea-Neamțiu.

HERTA, Adrian. "The Laws of Others: Western Legislative Patterns in the Foundation of Modern Romania" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.

HORNE, Cynthia. "Neighborhood Trust and Tolerance in Post-Communist Countries" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.

- MANEA**, Gabriel Stelian. "Alternative Images. The 50s in Romania through Jokes Broadcasted by Radio Free Europe" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.
- MANER**, Hans-Christian. "The Presentation of Galicia in the Kroprinzenwerk in Comparison with the South-Eastern Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.
- MARTON**, Silvia, Frédéric Monier, and Olivier Dard, eds. *Moralité du pouvoir et corruption en France et en Roumanie. XVIIIe-XXe siècle*. Paris: PU Paris-Sorbonne, 2017.
- MUNGIU-PIPPIDI**, Alina and Michael Johnston, eds. *Transitions to Good Governance: Creating Virtuous Circles of Anticorruption*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub, 2017.
- OMER**, Metin. "The Emigration of Muslims from Romania to Turkey (1923-1940): Perceptions of the Authorities in Ankara" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.
- O'NEILL**, Bruce. *The Space of Boredom. Homelessness in the Slowing Global Order*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.
- PLOPEANU**, Emanuel. "Dobruja in the Great War (1916-1918): Perceptions as Regards the United States journals" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.
- STAN**, Lavinia. "Memory and Othering in Romania" in Florin Anghel, Cristian Andrei Leonte, and Andreea Pavel, eds. *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*. Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2018.
- ZAMFIRA**, Andreea, Christian de Montlibert, and Daniela Radu, eds. *Gender in Focus: Identities, Codes, Stereotypes and Politics*. Berlin: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2018.

H-Romania Announcement

H-Romania is now in its fourth year of operation, with over 300 subscribers to the network. We publish book reviews in all social science and humanities fields related to Romanian Studies, operate a discussion forum, host links to research and teaching resources, and disseminate a variety of announcements and calls for papers/applications. 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 please follow us @HNet_Romania on Twitter.

Finally, we would 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.

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
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170	\$50 for sustainers \$100 for sponsors \$300 for patrons

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).

Organizational Links

The Society for Romanian Studies maintains close ties with a number of other scholarly organizations. Below, please find the liaison persons for each organizational link:

- **The American Political Science Association (APSA)** is the largest organization of political scientists in the United States. Each year, the APSA organizes a conference in late August. The SRS participates with one panel. Click [here](#) for the APSA website.
Contact: Claudiu Tufiş (University of Bucharest, claudiu.tufis@fspub.unibuc.ro)
- **The Romanian Studies Association of America (RSAA)** focuses on Romanian language and literature. Each year, the RSAA organizes two sessions at the annual Modern Language Association (MLA) convention, which takes place in January. Click [here](#) for more information on the RSAA. The SRS and RSAA offer a joint membership.
Contact: Margaret Beissinger (Princeton University, mhbeissi@princeton.edu)
- **The Southeast European Studies Association (SEESA)** is devoted to the exchange of knowledge amongst scholars interested in the area of Southeastern Europe. Many of its members are working on Romania and Moldova. Click [here](#) for more information. The SRS and SEESA offer a joint membership.
Contact: Dallas Michelbacher (Central Michigan University, miche1df@cmich.edu)