

Chronicle of the Activity of the Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies, 2023–2024

Active under the auspices of the Institute for South-East European Studies (ISEES) of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest, the Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies (SRSB, www.srsb.ro)¹ had a fruitful activity during the last couple of years, advancing and promoting the study of Byzantine culture in Romania and beyond through its online lecture series, flagship publications (*EBPB*, *SEBPB*), an international conference organised in Bucharest, as well as the publications and research projects of its members.

1. *The SRSB online lecture series*

The monthly SRSB lecture series, held online on Zoom (Tuesdays, 11:00 EE(S)T), featured 18 invited guests from Europe and the United States. Their lectures are listed below in chronological order:

Grigori Simeonov (Vienna), *Pastoralism in Macedonia from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. Levels of mobility, everyday life, and economic impact* (17.01.2023)

Lorenzo M. Ciolfi (Paris), *Oedipe à Byzance. Le rapport conflictuel entre l'héritage de Jean III Vatatzès et les projets de Michel VIII Paléologue* (21.02.2023)

Adrian Marinescu (Munich), *Implicit și explicit în literatura bizantină catanică. Cuv. Simeon Monahul despre sine și despre sufletul său* (21.03.2023)

Annemarie Weyl Carr (Dallas, TX), *Is a faceless icon a relic? Thoughts on the Eleousa tou Kykkou* (25.04.2023)

Béatrice Caseau (Paris), *Perception des stylites à l'époque médiobyzantine* (23.05.2023)

¹ The executive committee of the SRSB serves as the Romanian National Committee of the *Association Internationale des Études Byzantines* (AIEB) and the President of the SRSB, Andrei Timotin (EPHE, Paris), acts as the deputy president (président suppléant) of the AIEB.

- Nunzio Bianchi (Bari), *Photius and the ancient novel* (20.06.2023)
Elisabeta Negrău (Bucharest), *Hagiografie și identitate: sfinți din Dacia și Tracia în menologurile medievale din Balcani și Țările Române* (24.10.2023)
András Kraft (Vienna), *Apocalyptic rhetoric in Niketas Choniates' History* (28.11.2023)
Antonio Rigo (Venice), *Le Mont Athos (et Lavra) dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle: le témoignage des Vies de Niphon et de Romylos et d'autres textes hagiographiques* (11.12.2023)
Linda Safran (Toronto), *An exceptional early Byzantine censor* (23.01.2024)
David Carpen (Bucharest), *Omiletica în slujba polemicii teologice: predicile împotriva nestorianismului rostite de Sever al Antiohiei în Cyr, în octombrie 514* (20.02.2024)
Cătălin-Ștefan Popa (Bucharest), *Exemple de colofoane în manuscrise siriace medievale din Ierusalim* (19.03.2024)
Christos Malatras (Köln), *Hierarchy and order in late Byzantine society* (16.04.2024)
György Geréby (Vienna), *Neither Thomas nor Gregory: The vision of God and eschatology* (14.05.2024)
Florin Filimon (Münster), *Sorting things out: Modes of sortilege and imperial decision-making in the middle Byzantine period* (18.06.2024)
Damian Liviu (Bucharest), *Athanasius of Alexandria and the οἱ διαφέροντες in London Papyrus 1914* (22.10.2024)
Mihail K. Qaramah (Alba-Iulia), *Reforma liturghiei bizantino-slave în spațiul românesc, între sec. XVI–XVIII* (26.11.2024)
Marie-Hélène Blanchet (Paris), *Grégoire Akindynos au service du patriarche Jean XIV Kalékas? Les enjeux ecclésiologiques de la controverse entre Akindynos et Palamas* (03.12.2024)

2. The publications of the SRSB

Études byzantines et post-byzantines

In 2023–2024, the flagship publication of the SRSB, its yearly journal *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* (EBPB), expanded its record with two important volumes:

EBPB, new series, V (XII), 2023

Legacies and Entanglements: Religious Identity, Cultural Tradition and Political Order in the Byzantine Sphere. Edited by Nunzio Bianchi and Mircea Duluș. Heidelberg. 315 pp.

EBPB, new series, VI (XIII), 2024

Reading the Future in Byzantium and Beyond. New Approaches to the Byzantine Prophetic and Apocalyptic Tradition. Edited by Paul Magdalino and Andrei Timotin. Heidelberg. 219 pp.

Supplementa Études byzantines et post-byzantines

The series of the *Supplementa Études byzantines et post-byzantines* (*SEBPB*) has also grown with two substantial volumes:

SEBPB IV, 2023

Paolo Odorico, *Méthodes et contextes dans la littérature byzantine. Recueil d'articles.* Edited by Ovidiu Olar and Andrei Timotin. Heidelberg. 430 pp.

SEBPB V.1-2, 2024

The Akathistos Hymn in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Traditions. The History of a Liturgical Masterpiece Between Text and Image. 2 vols. Edited by Emanuela Timotin, Lidia Cotovanu, and Ovidiu Olar. Heidelberg. 304 + 384 pp.

Scriptores byzantini

The collection *Scriptores byzantini*, launched in 1958 under the auspices of the Romanian Academy, has been recently renewed by the members of the Institute for South-East European Studies and the Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies. The first nine volumes (critical editions and/or translations into Romanian of Byzantine historical works) were published by Vasile Grecu (I, II, IV, V, VII) and Haralambie Mihăiescu (III, VI, VIII, IX) between 1958 and 1985. Volume X was published by Simona Nicolae in 2015. These volumes can be freely accessed online.² The new series, coordinated by Simona Nicolae and published by Bucharest University Press, features a new volume that offers the critical edition of the fifth book of the Palatine Anthology alongside a Romanian translation rendering the elegiac couplet of the epigrams.

Scriptores byzantini. Nova series XIII (IV)

Anthologia Palatina. Liber V: TA EPΩTIKA = Antologia Palatină. Cartea a V-a: Poemele iubirii. Critical edition by Simona Nicolae, translation and notes by Simona Nicolae, Cristian Şimon, Margareta Sfirschi-Lăudat, and Sorana-Cristina Man. Bucharest. 346 pp. + 4 plates.

² <https://www.acadsudest.ro/ro/scriptores-byzantini>

3. International conference, Bucharest (September 2024)

On 4–7 September 2024, the SRSB, in collaboration with the ISEES of the Romanian Academy and the National Museum of Art, under the auspices of the AIEB, organized the international conference “Le Centenaire des congrès des études byzantines (1924–2024). Le congrès de Bucarest (1924) et l’internationalisation des études byzantines.” The conference marked the 100-year anniversary of the Congress organized by N. Iorga in 1924 in Bucharest. It brought together over 25 Byzantinists from Europe (Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Greece, Italy, Great Britain, Romania, Spain, and Serbia), as well as Argentina and the United States, who reflected on the importance of the 1924 Congress for the development of Byzantine studies by fostering the foundation of new research centres, specialized research journals (among which *Byzantion*, *Studi bizantini e neoellenici*, *Byzantinoslavica* and *Seminarium Kondakovianum*) and dedicated academic conferences. Keynote addresses were offered by Jannic Durand together with Maximilien Durand, and Paul Magdalino.

The first part of the event consisted of communications sessions (September 4–5) held at the National Museum of Art in Bucharest, of which seven were offered by SRSB members: Andrei Timotin (“Pourquoi un congrès international des études byzantines. L’argument de N. Iorga”), Petre Guran (“Entre byzantinisme et nationalisme. L’Orthodoxie dans la vision de Nicolas Iorga”), Sergiu Iosipescu (“Les églises princières de Curtea de Argeş – un pôle d’intérêt du premier Congrès international des études byzantines”), Ovidiu Cristea (“Le Conseil du roi Charles: Byzance et les Croisades dans l’œuvre de Gheorghe I. Brătianu”), Mihail Mitrea (“The Contributions of Oreste Tafra to Byzantine Studies before and after the First International Congress of Byzantine Studies”), Octavian Negoită (“A Philologist at Work: Vasile Grecu and the Development of Byzantine Philology after 1924”), and Ionuț Tudorie (“A True Mentor-Disciple Relationship: Vitalien Laurent AA in Correspondence with Petre Năsturel (1947–1949).”

The communication sessions were followed by a two-day study trip (September 6–7) at the monastery complexes of Cozia, where the concluding session of the conference took place, Govora, Hurezi, and Surpatele. The study trip focused on the role of Byzantine artistic heritage in Romanian religious practice.

The programme of the conference, the opening remarks (offered by Ioan-Aurel Pop, President of the Romanian Academy; Antonio Rigo, President of the AIEB; Călin Stegorean, director of the National Museum of Art; Daniel Cain, Director of the ISEES; and Andrei Timotin, president of the SRSB) and other interviews, as well as a selection of photos from the event are available on the SRSB website, at <https://srsb.ro/events>. The proceedings of the conference will be published in 2025 in the flagship journal of the SRSB, *Études byzantines et post-byzantines*.

4. SRSB members: major scholarly contributions and prestigious research grants

In the framework of the ERC-TYPARABIC project, led by Dr. Ioana Feodorov (vice-president of the SRSB) and housed by the ISEES, three volumes were published:

Ioana Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands. The East-European Connection* (Early Arabic Printing in the East 1). Berlin, De Gruyter, 2023. 441 pp.

Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond. First Volume of Collected Works of the TYPARABIC Project. Edited by Radu-Andrei Dipratu and Samuel Noble (Early Arabic Printing in the East 2). Berlin, De Gruyter, 2024. 339 pp.

Mihai Țipău, *Sylvester of Antioch. Life and Achievements of an 18th-Century Christian Orthodox Patriarch* (Early Arabic Printing in the East 3). Berlin, De Gruyter, 2024. 428 pp.

Moreover, Dr. Feodorov recently published:

Paul of Aleppo's Journal, vol. 1: *Syria, Constantinople, Moldavia, Wallachia and the Cossacks' Lands* (Arabic Christianity. Texts and Studies 7). Introductory notes, Arabic edition and English translation by Ioana Feodorov, with Yulia Petrova, Mihai Țipău and Samuel Noble. Leiden, Brill, 2024. 897 pp.

Among the most prestigious research grants awarded to SRSB members are:

ERC Starting Grant for the project “Reviving the Ascetic Ideal in the Eastern Mediterranean. Entangled Memories of Early Egyptian Monasticism in Medieval Syriac, Arabic, and Armenian Christianity (969–1375 CE),” 2023–2028, funded by the European Research Council and conducted at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Principal Investigator: Dr. Adrian Pirtea.

FWF START Award for the project “The Followers of the Apostles as Characters,” 2024–2029, funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and conducted at the University of Vienna. Principal Investigator: Dr. Dan Batovici.

Mihail Mitrea
(deputy secretary of the SRSB)