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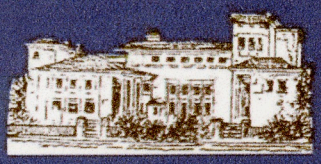

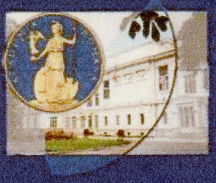

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KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF KEITH HITCHINS TO THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ROMANIA: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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Abstract: Prof. Keith A. Hitchins (1931-2020) was one of the most important contributors to the historiography of Romania in the 20th and 21st centuries. One of Prof. Hitchins' important contributions was as a builder of scholarly bridges between American and Romanian academics. This paper has two aims: 1) to provide a short outline of the professional development of Prof. Hitchins as a scholar and Romanianist; and 2) to sketch out a path toward a brief introduction to his contributions to Romanian historiography by taking a close look at five of his most significant works.

Keywords: Keith Hitchins; Romanian Historiography; Romanian National Movement; Romanian National Development; Romanian Studies

I. INTRODUCTION

Keith A. Hitchins (1931-2020) was one of the most important contributors to the historiography of Romania in the 20th and 21st centuries. Prof. Hitchins, who taught at the University of Illinois from 1967 to 2019, produced significant scholarly books, articles, and reviews that will remain useful and indispensable for a long time into the future. More than that, he also was a colleague, friend, and collaborator/encourager of a wide range of American, European, and Romanian scholars and students concerned with Romanian studies. He not only taught and mentored part of the current generation of

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Romanianists; he was one of the premier interpreters of modern Romanian culture and civilization to the wider world.[1]

One of Prof. Hitchins' contributions was as a builder of scholarly bridges between American and Romanian academics. Though it was difficult to pursue such an irenic task during the Cold War, from his first visit to Romania in 1960, Prof. Hitchins skillfully sought out and encouraged Romanian historians and others who were genuine scholars. His command of and his devotion to the Romanian past and the seriousness with which he studied it also gave legitimacy to American academics. From all of this, emerged the vital and rich cultural dialogue between Westerners and Romanians that has persisted to the present. Academic recognition of Prof. Hitchins' merit and contributions on both sides was further testified to by honorary membership in the Romanian Academy in 1991 and by the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000 from the premier US academic association for Slavic and East European Studies, the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies.[2]

This paper has two aims: 1) to provide a short outline of the professional development of Prof. Hitchins as a scholar and Romanianist; and 2) to sketch out a path toward a brief introduction to his contributions to Romanian historiography by means of a look at five of his most significant works.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF A ROMANIANIST

Prof. Keith Arnold Hitchins was born in the state of New York and did his graduate study at Harvard University There his professor was Robert Lee

1 For further documentation, the two most comprehensive sources are Vasile Puşcaş, *Keith Hitchins. The Historian's Honesty/Onestitatea istoricului*, Editura Şcoala Ardeleană, Cluj Napoca, 2021, and Paul E. Michelson, *Keith Hitchins (1931-2020). Trailblazer, Ambassador, and Elder Statesman of Romanian Studies*, „Archiva Moldaviae", Vol. 22, 2020, p. 409-429, parts of which segments of the present essay have been derived. See also Nicoleta Sălcudeanu, ed. *Keith Hitchins şi Istoria românilor*, „Vatra", Târgu Mureş, Vol. 33, Nr.7, 2006, p. 29-87; Iacob Mârza, *Keith Hitchins. Portrait of the Historian*, „Colloquia", Vol. 15, 2008, p. 139-158; Marcel Popa, *Keith Hitchins at 80*, 3rd edition, Editura Enciclopedică, Bucureşti, 2011, Lucian Boia, *Tineri americani în România*, in Lucian Boia, ed., „Dosarele secrete ale agentului Anton. Petru Comarnescu în arhivele Securităţii", selected and introduced with commentary by Lucian Boia, Editura Humanitas, Bucureşti, 2014, p. 231-273; Sorin Antohi, *Keith Hitchins and the Romanian Historical Canon*, „Archiva Moldaviae", Vol. 22, 2020, p. 431-440; and Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, *In Memoriam Keith Hitchins, un mare istoric şi prieten al românilor*, „Anuarul Institutului de Istorie George Barițiu", Vol 59, 2020, p. 487-492.

2. For decades, Romanianists have been increasingly annoyed by the incomprehensible fact that in America Romanian studies is included under the incomprehensible rubric of "Slavic Studies." A gain was made in 2010 when the AAASS became known as the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, the ASEEES. Unfortunately, its journal remained *The Slavic Review*. However, in 2022, as a result of the criminal Russian invasion of Ukraine, discussions began within the ASEEES to "decenter" the preponderance of Russian studies in the Association. Perhaps the journal will follow suit.

Wolff, one of the principal experts on South Eastern Europe in the world, an exponent of the Western Civilization approach to the past, and a practitioner of the interdisciplinary method in historical studies. In addition to a broad, multidisciplinary, liberal education, Prof. Hitchins developed exceptional language skills, eventually able to deploy in his work nearly twenty languages.

How did Keith Hitchins become a Romanianist? Prof. Wolff, who had had some contact with Romania, was the one who urged Prof. Hitchins to study Romania and to select Romania for his dissertation. Why Romania? As Prof. Hitchins later commented, "I suppose because it is intrinsically interesting. But it also offers unique opportunities for comparative studies and for illuminating the general processes of historical development."[3] He completed his dissertation at Harvard with distinction in 1964.

Following appointments at Wake Forest University NC and Rice University TX, in 1967, Prof. Hitchins moved to one of the most rapidly developing centers of East European and Slavic studies in the United States, the University of Illinois, where he was to remain for the rest of his outstanding career, and where, in 1969, after a remarkably short time he was promoted to a full professorship. Among his early mentors in the fields of Habsburg and Southeast European Studies were R. John Rath at Rice, Charles and Barbara Jelavich at Indiana University, and Ralph T Fisher at Illinois.

In 1957-1958, he had a Fulbright fellowship at the Institut d'Études Roumaines of the Sorbonne in Paris. He travelled to study the Habsburg Archives at Vienna, and to Sremski Karlovci to see the archives of the Habsburg Serbian Orthodox Church.

In 1960, Prof. Hitchins was one of the first Fulbright scholars to do study and research in Iron Curtain Romania itself (the other was Frederick Kellogg). He worked at the Institute of History in Bucureşti, where he was strongly supported by the director, Andrei Oţetea. He also appreciated the bibliographical and cultural assistance given him by Petru Comarnescu, the noted art and literary scholar. According to Prof. Hitchins, Comarnescu "served as a mentor to young Americans studying in Bucharest...."[4] Others who helped Prof. Hitchins' work, especially with the acquisition of books which became the building blocks of his amazing personal library, included Radu Sterescu, Constantin Stavilă, and Paul Simionescu.

Discovering by now that the materials for his dissertation were much more extensive than he had thought, Prof. Hitchins applied for a second fellowship in 1961, which he divided between Bucureşti and Cluj. Cluj turned

3. Keith Hitchins, *A Fulbright to Romania, 1960-1962*, in Remus Pricopie, Dorina Guţu, and Mihai Moriou, eds., „Fulbright Ripple Effect on International Education", Comunicare.ro, 2010, Bucureşti, p. 149.
4. From remarks made at the 50th Anniversary Fulbright Conference in Bucureşti in 2010. See Pricopie, *Ripple Effect*, p. 51

out to be the natural focal point of his work. It was there that he met Prof. Pompiliu Teodor, an outstanding scholar of about the same age who became a lifelong friend and colleague.[5] Not only did their research interests overlap, they shared concerns with and interests in most everything else. At Cluj, Prof. Hitchins also became acquainted with Romania's leading specialist on the 18th century, Academician David Prodan. Prof. Hitchins later wrote that Teodor and Prodan "aided me perhaps more then they realize in our discussions of the history of the Rumanians of Transylvania."[6] Among others at Cluj's Academy Library and University, as well as at Sibiu's Orthodox Theological Institute that were key to Prof. Hitchins' work were Mihail Triteanu, István Semlyén, Ştefan Pascu, Sofron Vlad, and Protopop Ioan N. Beju.[7] It was at Sibiu that he was given permission to study the Şaguna archive, which would be key for his second book. On his way home in 1966, he began research in the Hungarian National Archives and at the Széchényi National Library, both in Budapest.

Prof. Hitchins' nurturing of Romanian-American scholarly contacts played an important role in facilitating the pathbreaking 1966 International Indiana University Conference on the Nationality Problem in the Habsburg Monarchy. He was the link between the principal conference organizers, Charles and Barbara Jelavich and R. John Rath, and potential Romanian scholars that resulted in the first time an official Romanian delegation was able to participate in an American conference. One result of the conference was the publication of its proceedings in three large volumes of *The Austrian History Yearbook.*[8] Prof. Hitchins was the associate editor for all three volumes.

Prof. Hitchins followed this breakthrough by founding and editing in 1970, the journal *Rumanian Studies.* Five volumes followed ending in 1986. Prof. Hitchins wrote that the journal was a result of the successes of American-Romanian exchanges between 1960 and 1970: "It seemed to some of us who participated in these exchanges that the time had come to extend the scope of collaboration to include new work being done on both sides of the Atlantic."[9] Among the contributors to *Rumanian Studies* were many or even most of the leading lights of Romanian and American Romanianists of the 1970s and the early 1980s. At the same time, Prof. Hitchins was a founding member of the

5. See particularly Keith Hitchins, *A Remembrance of Pompiliu Teodor*, in Corina Teodor, ed., „Pompiliu Teodor şi lumea prin care a trecut", Editura Mega, Cluj Napoca, 2016, p. 127-131, and Keith Hitchins, *Romania, 1960-1962*, p. 143.
6. Keith Hitchins, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1969, p.xi.
7. Among others that he eventually became close to in Cluj were Liviu Maior and Vasile Puşcaş.
8. *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. III, 1967, Pt. 1, ix + 308 p; Pt. 2, iv +531 p., and Pt. 3, iv + 418 p.
9. Keith Hitchins, *From the Editor*, „Rumanian Studies", Vol. 1, 1970, p. vii.

Society for Romanian Studies and part of the first executive board of the SRS from 1973 to 1978. [10]

III. REMARKABLE SCHOLARSHIP

Let us turn now to our second purpose: providing a brief introduction to Prof. Hitchins' contributions to Romanian historiography through engagement with five of his most significant works. Though it is hoped that this will be useful to anyone interested in Romania, it is particularly designed to be a kind of guide to Romanian history for a hypothetical newcomer to Romanian studies. These five books represent three areas that in the end encompass the Romanian past: a synthesis of Romanian history from earliest times to the present; the history of the Romanian National Movement (RNM) in Transilvania, and the development of the Romanian National Project from 1774 to 1947

A. We move now to our proposed "Brief Introduction" to the works of Prof. Hitchins. We recommend that our hypothetical general reader begin this encounter beginning with the last book he published. Our Book Nr. 1, therefore, is *A Concise History of Romania,* which appeared in 2014.[11] Why read this book? Why discuss it first? There are several reasons for this. First, appearing near the end of his long career, the *Concise History* can be said to summarize his view of the Romanian past based on decades of research and publication. Second, for the reader and student approaching Hitchins' work for the first time, this book provides a convenient and systematic introduction to his historiographical vision, methods, and findings. A simple glance at the table of contents will reveal the common sense organizational scheme that makes accessing this book so easy Finally, *Concise History* demonstrates his mastery of the issues and sources, and his remarkably readable writing skills makes it an engaging book. In short, starting with this book not only will inform the general reader who wants to know something about the convoluted Romanian past, it ought to give everyone the simplest entrée into the imposing historiographical world of Prof. Keith Hitchins.

Prof. Hitchins begins by singling out Lucian Boia and Vasile Puşcaş for providing him with additional perspectives that inspired his survey and made it possible. He also credits the social history researches of Katherine Verdery and Gail Kligman for expanding his approach. In addition, he expresses his gratitude to Marcel Popa for his "enthusiasm for history" and his frank "critical judgments." (Popa was the editor and publisher in Romania of many of Prof.

10. For the history of the SRS, see Paul E. Michelson, *'To Promote Professional Study, Criticism, and Research on All Aspects of Romanian Culture and Civilization'*, „Balkanistica", Vol. 29, 2016, p. 263-277

11 Keith Hitchins, A *Concise History of Romania,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014, xii + 327p.

Hitchins' writings.) (xii)[12] I note this minor fact because this eclectic list is typical of Prof. Hitchins' irenic, multidisciplinary approach. And it highlights his ability to smoothly synthesize both Romanian and non-Romanian historiographies while avoiding partisanship and dogmatism, which is no mean achievement.

The book is made easy to follow by Prof. Hitchins' decision "to seek out long-term trends to provide guidance through complex and contradictory evolutions." (1) The first of these is the search by the Romanians for modernization, that is the transition out of feudalism through the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions to Westernization (or at least adaptation to Westernization).[13] Unfortunately for them, this process was much slower in Eastern Europe than in Western Europe in the 17th-19th centuries, was impeded by the controversies and emergence of extremist movements of the Inter-War era, and was further and terribly distorted by the deviant modernization methods and goals of the post-war Communist regime.

Secondly, he emphasizes the distinctive situation of the Romanians between East and West. This was in part a geographical phenomenon—their location in the so-called powder keg or shatter-belt of South Eastern Europe and frequent playground of imperial armies—and in part a cultural phenomenon—impacted by the West through Roman Catholicism, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Liberalism, and nationalism; and by the pervasive Eastern influence of a prolonged Byzantine/Orthodox heritage and the effects of Ottoman domination. Because of this, "the Romania that emerged in the twentieth century was a synthesis of East and West," a synthesis not always for the best and hotly debated to the present.[14] (1-2)

On the other hand, Prof. Hitchins emphasizes another Romanian distinctive, the fact that under "Ottoman pre-eminence," unlike Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece, "The Romanians [in the two Eastern Danubian Principalities] preserved their institutions and social structure and over time exercised greater or lesser degrees of administrative autonomy" (2) This preservation also, of course, came with plusses and minuses.

For Prof. Hitchins, the second major facet of the Romanian story from the 18th through 20th centuries is one of adaptation—politically, economically, socially, and culturally—along European models, what he calls the

12. Hitchins, *Concise History*, 2014, p. vii. Subsequent in text citations are to the book under discussion.

13. Modernization and nation-building are principal themes in Hitchins' *Ion I. C. Brătianu. Romania*, Haus Histories, London, 2011, a volume in The Makers of the Modern World. The Peace Conferences of 1919-23 and Their Aftermath series.

14. See, *inter alia*, Lucian Boia, *De ce este România altfel?*, 2nd edition, Editura Humanitas, Bucureşti, 2012, Vintilă Mihăilescu ed., *De ce este România astfel? Avatururile excepţionalismlui românesc*, Editura Polirom, Iaşi, 2017, and Vasile Boari ed., *Cine sunt Românii? Perspective asupra identităţii naţionale*, Editura Şcoala Ardeleană, Cluj Napoca, 2019

Europeanization of Romania across the board while trying to preserve their unique Romanian identity This proved to be an extremely difficult task. An even more difficult task faced the post-1989 "return to Europe," the hesitant but steady steps of which causes Prof. Hitchins to conclude "Perhaps the question to be asked is whether the great experiment of the synthesis of East and West has run its course." (3-5)

So why read this book? Put simply, to develop a well-grounded, concise overview of the Romanian past as a whole, to create a context for the history of Romania from earliest times to the present, and to lay the groundwork for the further study of that complicated evolution through time of one of the most distinctive cultures and civilizations in Europe, both East and West.

B. Having had a ravenous appetite for the Romanian past stimulated by Book Nr. 1 in this series, our quasi-mythical general reader should now be eager for more. Our recommendation would be to move next to Book Nr. 2, Prof. Hitchins' 1969 *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849*[15] This was his first book and had the merit of opening the door, even to experts, to an in depth understanding of the development of the Romanian national movement (hereafter usually RNM) in the Romanian lands. Why read this book? The importance of the RNM was heavily stressed in Prof. Hitchins' *Concise History.*[16] This book makes it clear why this was so. The serious reader wanting to know about the genesis of the RNM will find it lucidly and objectively presented here. (In fact, amusingly, one reviewer took Prof. Hitchins to task for being too detached and "essentially descriptive.")[17]

Interestingly, the RNM began in the most Westernized of the Romanian lands, Transilvania. The book opened to Western scholars the actual history of an area usually known only to the Western world as the home of the fictional Count Dracula.

Hitchins' thesis was plainly set forth at the outset:

"The national movement of the Rumanians of Transylvania in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century was the work of Rumanian intellectuals, the majority of whom were priests or the sons of priests. Although they never represented more than a small fraction of the total population, they were during this long period the only Romanians fully conscious of their national identity and possessed of a well-defined program of political action." (vii)

This book established him as a master of the Romanian sources and as a leader in Romanian studies. While clearly setting forth the story of this all

15. Keith Hitchins, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1969, xi + 311 p.
16. See especially Ch. 3, "From East to West," p. 62 ff.
17 Stephen Fischer-Galati, *Review of Keith Hitchins, The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849*, „Journal of Modern History", Vol. 42, Nr.3, 1970, p. 406-407

important moment in Romanian history, the book's comprehensive "Bibliographical Essay" (283-297) provided Western scholarship with a window into the riches of historical materials available on this rather unknown people and region unfortunately cut off from the West by the Iron Curtain.

Our imaginary general reader will find little or no difficulties in following Prof. Hitchins' argument, an argument that has remained unsurpassed for over fifty years. Nor will the reader fail to comprehend the twists and turns of the evolution of the RNM, which following the failure of the Revolutions of 1848, took a new direction.

C. Book Nr. 3 in our series is Prof. Hitchins' 1977 study of *Orthodoxy and Nationality. Andreiu Şaguna and the Rumanians of Transylvania, 1846-1873.*[18] Why read this book? Because it continues and expands the history of the RNM begun in Book Nr. 2 several decades down the road from the events and outcomes of 1848. It also produced for the first time in a Western language a book on the life and work of the dominant figure in mid-19th century Transilvanian Romanian life and development, Metropolitan Andreiu Şaguna (1809-1873). As with the first book, Prof. Hitchins brought to bear his command of archival and published sources in a way that gave full credit to his historical actors without falling into the numerous pitfalls or bias that traditionally undermined writing on the subject. And once again, the by-now-not-so novice reader will appreciate the straightforward organization of the table of contents.

Prof. Hitchins' thesis and purpose are once again clear from the outset:

"This study describes the political and cultural development of the Rumanians of Transylvania during the two crucial decades that preceded the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 During this period they came to a full consciousness of their identity, and for the first time it seemed that they must at last take their place among the political nations of the Habsburg monarchy" (1)

This experience had "significance beyond the boundaries of Transylvania" as well as for reviving the continuing "role of the higher clergy and the influence of the church generally in Rumanian society in Transylvania... following the revolution of 1848." (1) In addition—attenuating the assumptions of the traditional approach of Romanian historiography to the RNM issue—Prof. Hitchins underlines the fact that "Even during the revolution of 1848 and for decades afterwards the Rumanians of Transylvania sought a solution to their problems within the monarchy rather than in some new political combination beyond it" (6)

Şaguna, according to Prof. Hitchins, was mostly successful. "An assessment of Şaguna's place in the historical development of the Rumanians of Transylvania must be sought in the two main areas in which he worked: the

18. Keith Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality. Andreiu Şaguna and the Rumanians of Transylvania, 1846-1873,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1977, ix + 332 p.

church and politics." Knowing about Șaguna's role in these matters is crucial to our understanding of modern Romanian history His contributions as the founder of the modern Orthodox school system and in reforming the Orthodox Church in Transilvania to harmonize it with Western traditions were essential. So, too, was his significance in helping the Church "transition from the essentially patriarchal society of the first half of the nineteenth century to the modern age." Lastly, he "reaffirmed the role of the church in society at a time when the political power of the hierarchy was ebbing...[and] assured the church a permanent place in the new national movement that developed after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 " (276-282)

Orthodoxy and Nationality, in the end, brilliantly unravels "a complex of religious, ethnic, and imperial issues, dealt with secularism, the relationship between church and state, and the problems related to political and social activism," Prof. Pompiliu Teodor (along with David Prodan, one of the acknowledged masters of the RNM problem) wrote in 1993. This, Prof. Teodor pointed out, was made possible by Keith Hitchins' deep knowledge of the Habsburg Empire and the connections between "the Romanian phenomenon and the processes taking place in Central Europe. It is a "*summum*" because of Prof. Hitchins' "knowledge of the spirituality of the region" and his "exemplary objectivity "[19]

It was also something of a surprise to Romanian academics that Prof. Hitchins, despite coming from outside both the Romanian and the Orthodox milieu, was able to so profoundly and sensitively grasp the essence of Șaguna and his work.[20] Indeed, Prof. Hitchins was at pains to emphasize the primacy of the spiritual in all of Șaguna's work, efforts which "were directed toward the attainment of harmony between the inner spirituality of Orthodoxy, which transformed the life a man from within by changing his heart and mind, and the outward forms of social organization, which were intended to satisfy a nation's immediate strivings for political and economic progress."

All of this was the more salutary because censorship requirements in Communist Romania mandated the ignoring or minimizing the role of religion in the RNM. Prof. Hitchins not only put religion back into its well-deserved place in the evolution of modern Romania, he actually reintegrated discussion and recognition of this fact into the historiographical circuit both within and without Romania.

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19. Pompiliu Teodor, *Laudatio. Pentru conferirea titlului de Doctor Honoris Causa Domnului Keith Hitchins (University of Illinois, S. U. A.),* Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, 1993, in Sălcudeanu, *Keith Hitchins*, p. 39-41

20. Corina Teodor, *Laudatio. Pentru conferirea titlului de Professor Honoris Causa al Universității Petru Maior din Târgu Mureș domnului profesor Keith Hitchins (Universitatea Urbana, Illinois)*, in Sălcudeanu, *Keith Hitchins*, p. 42.

D Our next and final stop is at Books Nr. 4 and Nr. 5, Hitchins' contributions to the Oxford History of Modern Europe. These were *The Romanians, 1774-1866*, published in 1996, and *Rumania 1866-1947*, published in 1994.[21] Of course the sections dealing with Transilvania were derivative from Books Nr. 2 and Nr. 3 on the Romanian National Movement (RNM) discussed above, but the rest, particularly the material on the Danubian Principalities, Moldova and Ţara Românească, is new

Why should our conjectural general connoisseur read these books? Here we have, really for the first time, an accessible, extended treatment of the entire pre-Communist modern history of Romania and the Romanians east of the Carpathians in the Danubian Romanian Principalities from the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji in 1774 to the Communist takeover and the end of the monarchy in 1947[22]. Their publication by a major university press definitely put modern Romanian history on the map for the wider Western reading public.

As for the quality and scholarship of these works there can be no doubt. They are not a general synthesis slapped together on the basis of a few secondary works, but are the product of profound reading in a wide variety of materials and a deep grasp of the Romanian intellectual milieu. There is, indeed, no better such scholarly synthesis available in any language; and at over 900 pages the two volumes are substantial enough to satisfy professional specialists in modern Romanian history as well.

At the outset of Book Nr. 4, *The Romanians, 1774-1866,* Prof. Hitchins emphasizes the "fundamental ways" in which the Romanians of South Eastern Europe were distinctive. Though they shared the Orthodox faith and the Byzantine religious and cultural heritage (what N Iorga called *Byzance après Byzance*), a similar ecclesiastical regime, the experience of Ottoman domination, and a comparable agrarian socio-economic order with other nationalities in the area, their Latinate language, their contacts with the West (especially the Transilvanians), their preservation of autonomy under the Ottomans made the Romanian lands unique in South Eastern Europe. (1)

The focus is on by-now familiar themes: the integration of the Romanian lands into Europe, cultural development, the growth of the RNM, and the gradual rationalization of government, are set in the story of modern nation-building.[23] "The course of events between the 1770s and the 1860s reveals one

21 Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774-1947,* The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996, xi + 337 p., and Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947,* The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994, viii + 579 p.

22. Prof. Hitchins uses "Romanians" to refer to the residents of all the Romanian lands and "Rumania" to refer to the Romanian national state that emerged after 1859. He was also a long-time hold out for "Rumania" but seems to have acquiesced to the more usual "Romania" by 1996.

23. Elsewhere, Prof. Hitchins wrote "This process has often been called 'Europeanization,' a term I would interpret as meaning a drawing nearer to Europe in social and political

central fact... their steady integration into Europe. 'Integration', not 'Westernization', is the proper word, since their reception of European models and experience was an act of adaptation rather than one of imitation," particularly in the 1830s and after. (1-4)

Prof. Hitchins summarizes the findings of Book Nr. 4:

"The general path of development that Romania was to follow down to the Second World War had...been laid out. In domestic affairs the strong executive and near monopoly of power at the centre, in Bucharest, were the hallmarks of government. A two-party system contributed significantly to the stability and democratization of political life, even though the popular will was sometimes thwarted by the mechanisms of privilege and by public apathy As for the economy, industrialization made steady progress, but agriculture remained the foundation of the country's well-being, and those who sought agrarian reform encountered a formidable obstacle in tradition. The most dramatic change in social structure was the continued advance of the middle class. Romania's international relations, political, economic, and cultural, continued to be shaped by the process of integration into Europe. Yet, they could not agree on how fast and how complete integration should be, and thus the controversy over national identity and models of development intensified. . [However,] all sides to this great debate agreed on one critical point: that the Romanians stood as always at the crossroads between East and West." (317)

E. The story of the rise of modern Romania begun in Book Nr. 4 is completed in Book Nr. 5, *Rumania 1866-1947*, which, Prof. Hitchins declares,

"is about modern nation-building, a process that absorbed the energies of the Rumanian political and intellectual élite between the latter half of the nineteenth century and the Second World War. It traces the efforts of that élite to form a national state encompassing all Rumanians and to provide it with modern political institutions and an economy and social structure based on industry and the city rather than on agriculture and the village." (vii)

This nation-building took place on the foundation laid by the developments of 1774-1866, particularly of the Romanian National Movement (RNM) in Transilvania and the evolution of the Danubian Principalities following 1774 (which was heavily influenced by emigrants from Transilvania to the Principalities, especially educators). This owed once more to the distinctives and

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organization, in culture, and in mentality " Pricopie, *Ripple Effect,* p. 80. Prof. Hitchins also thought that E. Lovinescu's theory of synchronization described this process well. Teodor, "Hitchins în dialog,", 2006, p. 32-34. In the same interview he argued that part of Romania's uniqueness lay in the fact that it was both Western and Eastern but at the same time not Western or Eastern. The same thought is developed in Eugen Lovinescu's *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, Editura Ancora, București, 1924, Vol. 1, p. 20-23, which describes the influences on Romanian civilization as both *ex oriente lux* and *ex occidente lux*.

particularities of the Romanians by which they contrasted with the other South Eastern European nationalities stressed above in Book Nr. 4. Finally, it resulted from the acceleration of the adaptation to and eventual achievement of Western values, worldviews, and institutions that had begun in the 18th century

At the same time, Prof. Hitchins emphasizes the importance of the international diplomatic framework for Romanian development between 1866 and 1947 The Romanian Question had become internationalized following the Napoléonic Wars and because of the increasing activism of Russia in the Balkans. Though Romanian diplomatic prospects were not good at the outset, by dint of clever *fait accomplis*, they were able to achieve independence and eventually the establishment of a unitary national state by 1919 "Thus, this account of nation-building keeps constantly in view Rumania's relations with the great powers." And, though, the book is organized chronologically, which makes it easy to follow, the text will deviate from this "to follow general trends in economic and social development and to discern changes in the way Rumanians thought about themselves." (vii)

The events of 1866 brought to Romania several things that provided the framework for the modern Romanian state: the Hohenzollern monarchy; an educational system established on Western models; a similarly Western-style institutional, constitutional, and political structure that would persist until after World War I.

The narrative is divided into six chronological segments: independence (1866-1881), the reign of King Carol I (1881-1914); the First World War (1914-1918); Greater Romania (1919-1940); the Second World War (19400-1944); and the disintegration of Modern Romania and the transition to Communist rule (1944-1947) Easy to follow and easy to comprehend.

Books Nr. 4 and Nr. 5 were a remarkable achievement and contribution. I was continually astonished by Prof. Hitchins' grasp of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which is my particular research interest. And his gift of synthesis never sacrifices accuracy to achieve brevity Andrei Pippidi provides fitting final words on these two volumes: "It is a synthesis which explores the sinuous history of the Romanians from 1774 to 1947...[It is] clear and balanced, cleansed of all impurities of partisan passions."[24]

IV. CONCLUSIONS

So why read the five books singled out above? The argument here is that these five books provide a brief introduction to the work of Prof. Hitchins and, at the same time, a concise introduction to the historiography of the Romanians. There is no surer guide through the intricacies of Romania's complex and convoluted past than Prof. Keith Hitchins. It was not owing to an eccentric or generous gesture when Adrian Marino called Prof. Hitchins one of the few ("two

24. Andrei Pippidi, *Un saint-simonian român*, in Sălcudeanu, *Keith Hitchins*, p. 76.

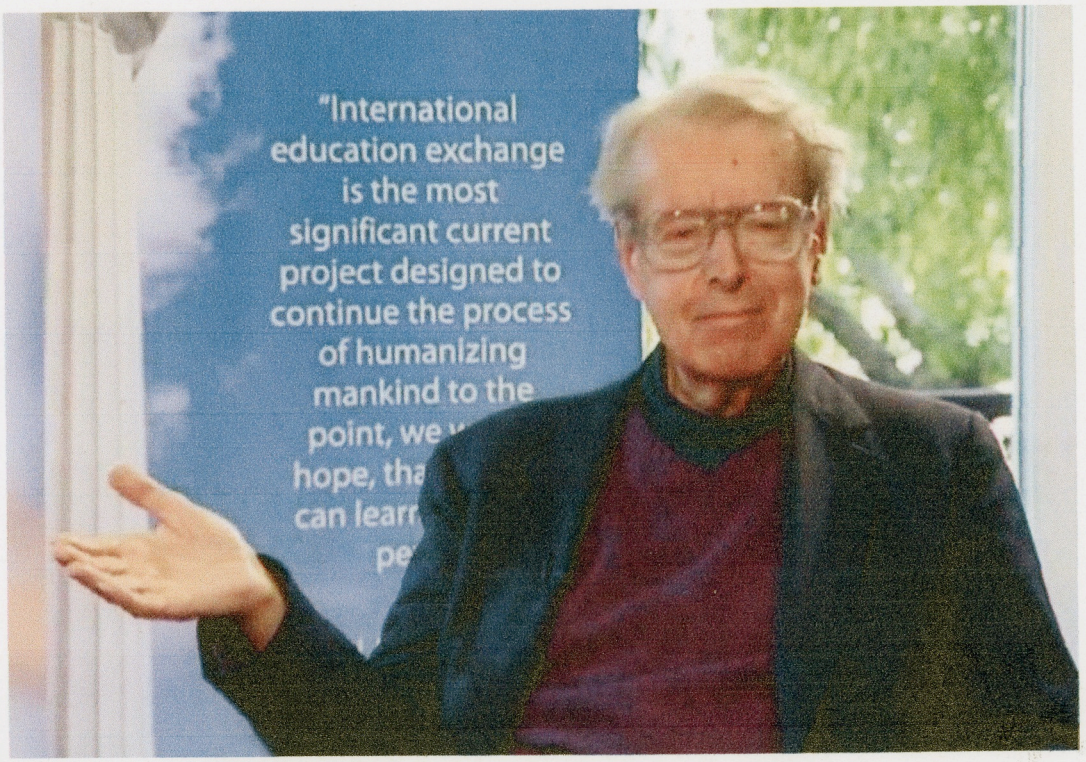
or three") American historians who really understood contemporary Romania as well as its history and culture.[25] He was not only the outstanding American scholar of Romanian history and Romanian studies, he was arguably the world's leading expert on the "Romanian Phenomenon" anywhere.

The five books singled out for notice above, while they were written in traditional historiographical method and form, set a very high bar and will remain standard for a long time. The 2000 award statement for his ASEES Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Contributions was to the point: Hitchins' "scholarship is recognized internationally for its volume and breadth, its cumulative quality and its lasting relevance." At the same time, his constant concern for mediating Romanian culture to academic and popular audiences around the world will also have long range effects.

Prof. Keith Hitchins was old school: dignified, upholder of strict standards, and formal, almost unassuming. What he has left behind will perpetuate his memory for a long time and the student of the Romanian past—hypothetical or not—cannot be said to have come to grips with that past without doing some serious reading in the writings of Prof. Keith Hitchins. Perhaps the brief introduction set forth above will help to that end.

25. In his posthumously published autobiography, Adrian Marino, *Viața unui om singur*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2010, p. 349.

Keith Hitchins and Pompiliu Teodor in the 1990s



Keith Hitchins in 2010