

## Foreword

The first two numbers of the RJAS: *Space and the City in American Culture*, the topic of the RJAS 2014, vol. 1 and *Urban Spaces and American Culture*, the RJAS 2014 vol. 2, respectively, publish articles based on the presentations which the contributors made on the occasion of the RAAS – Fulbright Conference: **Remapping Urban Spaces – American Challenges**, held at Ovidius University, Constanța in October 4-7, 2012.

The purpose of the conference, whose key-note speakers were Edward Soja, distinguished Professor of Urban Planning, UCLA, and Augustin Ioan, Professor at the University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, was to address contemporary debates, changes and developments within urban studies in the United States, as reflected in the latest interpretations of space both as an urban identity and as a textual strategy. The topic was tackled from various interdisciplinary perspectives: cultural and literary studies, geography, sociology, anthropology, history, political science, institutions among other fields.

The contributions turned into articles and send for publication have been divided, after the peer reviewing process, into two groups, the former addressing the topic of space and the city in American literature, the latter discussing urban spaces and institutions as reflected in the American city and illustrated by language and culture. Space mirroring excess, violence, pecuniary culture, segregation, alienation, myth, in other words, the city in its heterogeneity are represented by, and interpreted through, literary texts which place together Faulkner, Dos Passos, Paul Auster, Richard Wright, Fred D'Aguiar, Salmon Rushdie, Robert Lowell, and hipster poets. The articles published in the first volume reveal a fascinating, varied perspective on space and the city, bridging the mythical south with the modern and postmodern north, searching for identities in spaces which seem to constantly resist their stability.

We are positive that the articles published in the first number of the e-journal of the Romanian Association for American Studies are not only a pleasant, academic reading, but, more importantly, provide original views and basic bibliography for further research on the topic.

The Editors