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## INFORMES

### The George Santayana Society: 1981-2011

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On several occasions around 1980, Paul Kunze suggested that there ought to be a Santayana Society. In those days and for a long time thereafter, nothing happened in the world of Santayana Studies that was not initiated by Herman Saatkamp Jr. He agreed that this was a good idea, and called an organizational meeting in late 1981. I was not at this meeting, and only began to attend in the following year. Annual meetings were to be held at the December meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division. A large number of Group Meetings make up the program of this annual meeting, both then and now; and the George Santayana Society (GSS) was added to the list. The meetings are held in a loose rotation among large East Coast cities of the US, including Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington.

At the second meeting of the Santayana Society, this time in Baltimore, John McCormick read a paper to the Society on December 28, 1982 on the subject of "Santayana's Idea of the Tragic". He had begun his work on Santayana which was to lead to the splendid biography that appeared in 1987. At this same time, my bulletin of the Society came into being, under the lengthy title: *Overheard in Seville: Bulletin of the Santayana Society*. I published John's paper, and it became a regular practice to print each year those papers that were read at the annual meeting of the Society. Other regular items were to appear each year. Herman, who was then based in Florida, would provide two items. There was to be a Bibliographical Update to the book *George Santayana: A Bibliographic Checklist, 1880-1980*, that he and

John Jones had just brought out in 1982 under the auspices of the Philosophy Documentation Center. Since that time, three or four pages of fresh items have appeared each year, consisting both of new publications and of earlier ones just discovered. As well as this, Herman was to report each year on the progress of the Santayana Edition, the major project led by him of publishing Santayana's entire oeuvre following the demanding principles denoted by the term "Critical Edition". As well as these regular features of the *Bulletin*, it became my practice to write something of my own on most years, and a variety of other items concerning Santayana have appeared. Herman and I became co-editors, which was to last until he took on his position as President of the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

The Society, which now goes by the name *The George Santayana Society*, was run by Herman for a number of years, until he turned it over to me, as assisted by John Lachs. At the meetings two or three talks are given and followed by friendly and spirited discussion. There has been a minimum of business and formality. But recently meetings have become more formalized and the society has adopted a written constitution. This was in part because it is required for participation in international conferences. The current president of the society is Glenn Tiller.

A recent challenge has been to find ways to co-operate with Santayana scholars in Europe and especially in Spain where there has been a renaissance of work on his writings. We have been assisted here by Chris Skowronski, a Polish scholar who speaks both English and Spanish and is active on both sides of the Atlantic. This liaison has benefited from recent international conferences on Santayana, one of which was organized by Skowronski in Poland, and another took place in Valencia under Spanish auspices.