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Newsletter

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The RSAA Newsletter is published twice a year.

REMINDER: All RSAA members who have changed their mailing address and institutional affiliation, or who now also have an e-mail address, are kindly requested to update these data by contacting the editor. Annual dues (\$15.00, payable to RSAA) are to be sent to Anca-Elena L. Holden, 40 Greenwich Hill, Belchertown, MA 01007.

Letter from RSAA President

Dear RSAA Members,

As you might remember, we left the MLA convention with many plans, ideas, and suggestions to create a journal and to increase the number of RSAA members. In January, we all voted on the title of the new RSAA Journal: *Romanian Studies in a Comparative Context*.

The next step regarding the journal was and still is to find a host university that could launch our journal. Domnica Radulescu proposed Washington and Lee University as the host institution. Adriana Varga of Indiana University also offered to look into possibilities of publishing our journal. Furthermore, Domnica and I offered to co-edit the first volume of the journal. While we were aware of the daunting amount of work that this will entail, we also felt that we need to get this project started while there was still enthusiasm for it.

However, life and work got in the way again. As the summer vacation begins, I hope that the initial enthusiasm can be revived. This new scholarly beginning is very important for our organization and it can only happen if we put our time and effort into it.

With best wishes for a relaxing and productive summer,
Valentina Glajar

Panels at

2005 MLA Convention, Philadelphia, PA, 27-30 December 2006

Living at the Outskirts: Cinema and East European Countries

Program arranged by RSAA.

Presiding: Catalina Florina Florescu, Purdue Univ.

1. "Collapsing Worlds before and after Communist Regime in Lucian Pintilie's *Balanta* and Nae Caranfil's *Filantropica*," Catalina Florina Florescu, Purdue Univ.
2. "Border Hieroglyphs in Cristian Mungiu's *Occident* and Hans-Christian Schmid's *Lichter*," Ramona Uritescu-Lombard, Harvard Univ.

Mircea Cartarescu at Home in the World: Comparative Approaches to His Work

Program arranged by RSAA.

Presiding: Laura Savu, Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro.

1. "Narrative Hybridity and the Politics of Dream Worlds: Mircea Cartarescu's *Nostalgia*," Marcel Cornis-Pope, Virginia Commonwealth Univ.
2. "Nostalgia and the Logic of Late Postcolonialism," Letitia Guran, College of William and Mary
3. "Memory in *Nostalgia* by Mircea Cartarescu, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* by Milan Kundera and *Dictionary of the Khazars* by Milorad Pavic," Lenka Pánková, Univ. of Pittsburgh.

West Goes East: (Re)turning to East Central Europe After 1989

Program arranged by the Discussion Group on Romanian Studies.

Presiding: Anca L. Holden, Univ. of Georgia.

1. "An Invisible Other: The New Eastern Europe and the Shaping of Transnational American Studies," Joseph Benatov, Penn State Univ.
2. "French-Czech Exile and the Unbearable Great Return in Kundera's *Ignorance*," Jeanine Teodorescu, Loyola Univ., Chicago.
3. "An Aesthetic of Withdrawal: Democratization, Art and the Palace of Parliament," Anthony Gardner, Univ. of New South Wales, Australia

4. "Back to the Balkans: Re-Imagining Alterity through the Gaze of post-1989 Balkan Cinema," Gabriela Stoicea and Lucian Ghita, Yale Univ.
5. "My Life for a Photograph: Second Generation Encounters with Eastern Europe," Susan Jacobiwiz, Queensborough Community College, New York.
6. "I Am What They Think I Am': Contemporary Cultural (Mis)Constructions in Eastern Europe," Chris Bell, Nottingham Trent University, UK.

RSAA Annual Meeting-28 December 2005, MLA Washington D.C.

Meeting Minutes

- Present: RSAA Executive Members: Valentina, Glajar, Domnica Radulescu, Jeanine Teodorescu, Anca Holden, Anca Munteanu
- Regular members: Domnita Dumitrescu, Peter Christensen, Letitia Guran, Laura Savu, Ileana Orlich, (left meeting before it ended), Adriana Varga (left meeting before it ended)
- First-time members and visitors: Mihaela Marin, Ileana Popa, Mihaela Petrescu, Corina Petrescu, Estella Ene, Maria Orban, Gabriela Capraroiu, Lillian Polak and friend (did not give her name on attendance sheet and both left meeting before it ended)

The meeting was opened by Valentina Glajar, RSAA President, at 5:15pm.

She invited Dr. Christian Moraru to speak about the possible visit of Romanian author Mircea Cartarescu at the MLA in 2006. He asked the RSAA to consider Laura Savu's proposal for an RSAA session and to organize a reading. After his presentation, Christian Moraru left the meeting since he had previous engagements.

I. MLA Recommendations Valentina Glajar informed participants about the recommendations of the MLA following its 2005 review of the RSAA activity--the first point on the agenda. The concerns of the MLA Program Committee were twofold: the low number of members and the overlap between the executive committees of the RSAA and the RDG. She proposed a change in the article IV of the RSAA by-laws which states that the Executive Committee of the RSAA consists of the President, the Vice-President/MLA Liaison, the Secretary-Treasurer, the past president, and the Chair of the RDG. It was unanimously approved and therefore the executive position of the Chair of the RDG is removed from the Executive Committee. The RSAA Executive Committee will consist from now on of: the RSAA President (2 years), the Vice-President/MLA Liaison (2 years), the Secretary-Treasurer (3 years), and the past president (2 years). Valentina also indicated that the RSAA website has to be updated since it still has the old by-laws and the Executive Committee of the 1990s.

Then Valentina opened the discussion regarding ways to increase the RSAA membership. In 2005 the RSAA had 51 members. The MLA did not specify the number of members that the RSAA should aim for. Valentina mentioned that 8 years ago the RSAA had about 50 members and the affiliation was renewed without any objections from the MLA. Anca Holden indicated that a major concern is the fact that there are many one-time RSAA members who present papers at the RSAA and who do not renew their membership. Contacting an MLA representative to find out the number of members that the MLA requires for the RSAA was also discussed.

Strategies of increasing the RSAA membership were discussed. In this direction, the idea of a new and improved RSAA website was discussed. Letitia Guran proposed that the RSAA collaborates with other MLA associations and organizations like the association for Greek Literature, with whom Letitia has had contact in the past. Valentina pointed out that although welcome, this type of collaborations are in effect weakening the individuality of the RSAA.

Mihaela Petrescu proposed that various Romanian student organizations in the US should be contacted and informed about the RSAA. She also suggested that the Fullbright Commission should be contacted so that other Romanian students can be put in touch with the RSAA.

Jeanine suggested that the flyer she made for the RSAA sessions organized in 2005 be added to the sessions for 2006. She also suggested that the flyer be sent to university departments in the US who have Romanian, (Eastern) European, Slavic, and Comparative Literature programs. One member from the audience suggested that flyers be sent to English departments as well. All RSAA members were asked by Anca Holden to participate in this process and to send flyers to various universities; all agreed and other members suggested that each of us should bring two more members to the association. (Ileana Popa came to the RSAA meeting at Letitia's invitation; Mihaela Marin came invited by Valentina Glajar. Anca Holden invited Christian Moraru, Laura Savu, Mihaela Petrescu, Lillian Polak and her friend.)

II. Journal of the RSAA: In 2005, Ileana Orlich offered to coordinate a paper journal of the RSAA. Jeanine and Valentina reported that they both emailed Ileana Orlich to discuss the project, but their emails were not answered. The idea of an online version was brought to discussion. Participants discussed three major concerns:

1. the need of a computer expert to maintain the website; paid or unpaid position
2. the need for members willing to serve as editors
3. the need for funding

Anca Holden informed participants that Alexandru Bodor, RSAA 2005 member, had expressed his interest in helping out with establishing a RSAA website (buying a domain for the RSAA on the internet). She offered to ask him if he would be interested in helping out with an online RSAA journal. Valentina suggested that the position of webmaster should be unpaid. Anca Holden suggested that it should be a paid position. Jeanine suggested that the position of editor should be paid. Anca Holden proposed that Valentina and Domnica should serve as editors of the journal, but they suggested that they don't have the time right now for this project. Letitia offered to serve on the editorial board and encouraged participants to support the idea of an online journal even if it is not as prestigious as a paper journal, as was the concern of several participants. Peter suggested that we ask the MLA to help us in this endeavor. Domnica also offered to ask several publishing houses she knows that may be interested in supporting the project. It was proposed that the online journal should be further discussed by RSAA members since no concrete plan could be made at the meeting to start running it right away.

III. 2006 RSAA Session Proposals: Catalina Florescu's proposal was approved. Laura Savu's proposal was discussed; several participants suggested that a session on one author may not be a good idea since Cartarescu is not known in the US, his first book *Nostalgia* was just published at the end of 2005 in the US. Domnica proposed that the session on Cartarescu should be opened up. A combined session between Sorin Cucu's proposal and Laura's was proposed; Laura, however, pleaded for a session on Cartarescu only. Mihaela Marin insisted that a session on Cartarescu would actually be in concert with the activity of the RSAA. Valentina suggested that members should vote on the two proposals. Although a vote was taken right away, Anca Holden indicated that not all present had the right to vote as they were not RSAA members. Mihaela Petrescu, Corina Petrescu, Mihaela Marin, Gabi Capraroiu, Maria Orban gave Anca \$15.00 checks or cash for RSAA membership dues. Another vote was taken, the session on Cartarescu only, passed with 9 votes for and 5 against. Sorin's session proposal was therefore rejected.

Budgetary Decision: \$200 from RSAA funds were approved by RSAA members to go towards Mircea Cartarescu's air fare.

IV. Anca Holden's and Valentina Glajar's Proposals Anca Holden's proposal for establishing an award of \$150 for ABDs (graduate students who have completed their course work and passed the PhD qualifying exams) who want to come to the MLA for job interviews and/or counseling was rejected. Valentina proposed an award for the best presentation at one of the two RSAA sessions. An award of \$150 for the "Best Paper

presented at a RSAA Session by a Graduate Student" was voted on and accepted by RSAA members. It was also decided that the RSAA Executive Committee should review the papers and choose the best presentation to be awarded.

V. Other Issues:

Jeanine Teodorescu suggested that the RSAA dues be raised in 2006. It was voted on and decided that the dues for lecturers, assistant, associate, and full professors will be raised to \$20 and the dues for graduate students and emeriti will remain the same in 2007.

Jeanine also suggested that the meeting should be scheduled at 5:15 rather than 5.

At 6:45pm Valentina Glajar adjourned the meeting.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Nicolae Babuts (Syracuse Univ.) has the following invitation to extend: "I will be reading a paper on "Baudelaire and Balzac" at the 2006 MLA Convention in Philadelphia. I certainly would be happy to have a Romanian audience. Thanks."

Margaret Beissinger (Univ. of Wisconsin) will join the Slavic Department at Princeton Univ. in Fall 2006. Congratulations!!

Oana Chivoiu (Purdue Univ.) presented the paper "Anna Letitia Barbauld: Re-Envisaging the National Subject" at this year's edition of The British Women Writers Conference (March 24th, Gainesville, FL)

Domnita Dumitrescu (California State Univ., Los Angeles) published an extensive article, "Agradecer en interlengua: una comparación entre la competencia pragmática de los estudiantes nativos y no nativos de español en California," in the Proceedings of the Second International Colloquium of the EDICE program (Estudios del Discurso de Cortesía en Español), published in CD-ROM format by the University of Costa Rica, in 2006 (editor: Jorge Murillo).

Forthcoming are: an article on Renga, by Mexican poet Octavio Paz, winner of the Nobel Literature prize, in the Proceedings of the XV International Congress of Hispanists held in Monterrey, Mexico; an article on the discourse uses of *sí* in Mexican Spanish, in the Proceedings of the VI International Congress on Spanish in the Americas, held in Tordesillas, Spain; an article on the politeness function of interrogative repetitions in Mexican Spanish, in a special issue of the journal Pragmatics; and an article on polite speech acts across cultures, in the Southwest Journal of Linguistics.

At the Southern California Chapter of American Association of Spanish and Portuguese she delivered the paper "Spanglish: polémica, retorica y lingüística" (Spring 2006, UCLA).

Monica Grecu (Univ. of Nevada, Reno) was instrumental in creating an International Agreement between the Univ. of Nevada, Reno, and the University of Art and Design of Cluj (former Institutul Ioan Andreescu) and my University of Nevada, Reno. On May 1, 2006 the first Cluj UAD official delegation (the Rector, Dean, Chancellor, and a grad student) visited Reno.

For the ISSEI Conference in Malta (July 24-28) Professor Grecu has prepared two papers: "Voiculescu Self-challenge and National Identity" and "The Enduring Myth and Its Function in Crystallizing Narrative Identities."

Aleksandra Gruzinska (Arizona State Univ.) published the article "E.M. Cioran and Constantin Noica: An Epistolary Dialogue between Two Romanian Writers in the Cold War Years" in Connections. European

Studies Annual Review 2 (2006): 40-47. Rocky Mountain European Scholars Consortium. Center for the Study of Europe. Brigham Young University. (This is an online journal. Search Google for RMESC or try the following URL address: <http://europe.byu.edu.rmesc.html>)

Professor Gruzinska is taking a group of students from Arizona State University to study at Laval University in Quebec, Canada, from 7/3 through 8/6/06.

Nicolae Harsanyi (Florida International Univ.) presented the paper "Romania at World's Fairs in the 1930s" at the 2006 meeting of the Florida Conference of Historians, Miami Beach, 4-6 May, 2006.

Anca L. Holden (Univ. of Georgia) has presented the paper "In jeder Sprache sitzen andere Augen: Political and Poetological Aspects in Herta Müller's *Der König verneigt sich und tötet*" at Yale Univeristy in April 2006.

Her article "Marianne Ehrmann's *Ein Weib ein Wort*-A Platform for Moral Education" was accepted for publication in the volume *Challenging Separate Spheres: Female Bildung in 18th and 19th Century Germany*. Ed. Jeffrey L. Sammons and Marjanne Gooze. Oxford: Peter Lang. Forthcoming in 2006.

Noemi Marin (Florida Atlantic Univ.) had her article "Communication Adaptation and Competence in Global Times: Intercultural Challenges for Eastern European Foreign Graduate Students in American Academia," published in *The Journal of Journalism and Communication*, (University of Bucharest) 4.13, (2005): 52-62.

She also contributed the chapter "Rhetoric at the Gates of Revolution: Romanian Presidential Discourse in Translation," to *Advances in the History of Rhetoric*, Vol.7. (Ed. Robert Gaines). College Park, MD: American Society for the History of Rhetoric, 2006, pp. 293-296. In the same volume she published two translations: "Communiqué to the Country by the Council of the National Salvation Front," [The People's Sparkle, Dec. 23, 1989, Romania.] and "Defending Romania's Socialist Achievements, Its Independence and Its Territorial Integrity- Address by Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu," [The Sparkle, LIX.14726, Dec. 22, 1989, Romania.]

Lenka Pánková (Univ. of Pittsburgh) earned her Ph.D. degree in May 2006 and is currently holding a Visiting Professorship in the Slavic Department, Univ. of Pittsburgh. Congratulations!!

Corina Petrescu graduated with a Ph.D. in German studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has obtained a visiting Assistant Professor position in the Modern Language Department at Kansas State University. Congratulations!!

Ileana Florentina Popa earned her M.A. degree from the Department of English, Virginia Commonwealth Univ., (Masters' Thesis: *Cultural Stereotypes: From Dracula's Myth to Contemporary Diasporic Productions*), and is enrolled in the Ph.D. program at the Univ. of Virginia, starting Fall 2006. Congratulations!!

Her papers, "The Birth of the Novelistic Consciousness at the Beginning of the 18th Century - A (Para)Textual Analysis," and "The War with the Dunces: Leonard Welsted and the 'Popian Law'" are being published in the *Proceedings of the 4th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities*, 10-14 January 2006, Renaissance Iikai Waikkiki Hotel. Honolulu: HICAH, 2006.

Laura Savu completed all work for a Ph.D. in English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, with a major in 20th century British Literature and minors in 19th century British Literature and Composition. Her dissertation, *Postmortem Postmodernists: Authorship and Cultural Revisionism in Late Twentieth-Century Narrative*, further reflects her interest in the intellectual and cultural exchanges carried out by contemporary writers with their famous literary predecessors. Congratulations!!

She authored two articles, entitled "How Literature is Lived Through: 'Touching Reading' and Geoff Dyer's 'Sheer Rage'" and "The 'Crooked Business' of Storytelling: Authorship and Cultural Revisionism in Peter Carey's Jack Maggs" which are forthcoming in *Prose Studies* and *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, respectively.

Romanian Studies Association of America

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