



EAST – WEST CULTURAL PASSAGE

**Journal of
the “C. Peter Magrath” Research Center
for Cross-Cultural Studies**

Number 9 – 2010

East-West Cultural Passage is the journal of the “C. Peter Magrath” Research Center for Cross-Cultural Studies. It appears annually and publishes work by scholars interested in the cross-cultural dialogue in areas such as literature, history, film, popular culture, institutions, politics and related subjects. The journal is devoted to the study of cross-cultural understanding with a clear humanistic emphasis. Articles with an interdisciplinary character are particularly welcome. The journal also publishes notes and comments, review essays and book reviews.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Honorary Member
Alexandra Mitrea, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Editor in Chief
Ana-Karina Schneider, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Review Editor
Eric Gilder, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Review Editor
Anca-Luminița Iancu, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Manuscript Editor
Ovidiu Matiu, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu: Web Editor

BOARD OF EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS

Anthony O’Keeffe, Bellarmine University
Raluca Radu, Göttingen University
Carrie Coaplen-Anderson, Morehead State University
Matthew Ciscel, Central Connecticut State University
William Stearns, Independent Scholar
Estela Ene, Purdue University, Indianapolis

Cover design: Mugur Pascu

Editorial Offices:

“C. Peter Magrath” Research Center for Cross-Cultural Studies
Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu
Bulevardul Victoriei 5-7, 550 024 Sibiu
Tel: +40 (0) 269 21 55 56 (Ext. 201)
Fax: +40 (0) 269 21 27 07

ISSN 1583-6401 (Print)

ISSN 2067-5712 (Online)

© “C. Peter Magrath” Research Center for Cross-Cultural Studies

CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Currencies and Realities: Capitalism, Formalism, American Studies	SÄMI LUDWIG 7
The Impact of Global English on Linguistic Minorities in Romania and Moldova: Global Integration or American Cultural Imperialism?	MATTHEW CISCEL 28
Towards the Invocation of Pre-existing Stasis: Maidens, Mothers and <i>Murderessing</i> in the Emergent Video Film in Nigeria	OGAGA OKUYADE 44
Transatlantic Perspectives in Fiction: D. H. Lawrence's "America"	CAMELIA ANGHEL 69
The Metropolis as a Source of Insanity and Revelation in J.M.G. Le Clezio's <i>Fever</i>	ANA-BLANCA CIOCOI-POP 84
American Folk Pastimes (1607-1850): On Route to Sport Games in the American Colonies	SORIN ȘTEFĂNESCU 92
The Changing Role of TB Sanatoria: From Sarnac New York to Romania's Magic Mountains	JONATHAN J. STILLO 101
Jane Austen's <i>Emma</i> Seen through the Cinematic Lens	CORINA SELEJAN 115

Of Drugs, Documents and Pseudo States: The Odd Story of the Missing Broadcasting Ship	ERIC GILDER 136 MERVYN HAGGER
Frontier and Vast Empty Space, the Affect on the American West Psyche	SCOTT EASTMAN 151
To Enter Society or Return to Nature: Confucian and Taoist Perspectives on Traditional Chinese Values	MINGLE GAO 164
Notes on Contributors	177

ABSTRACTS

Currencies and Realities:
Capitalism, Formalism, American Studies

SÄMI LUDWIG
UHA Mulhouse (France)

“The map is not the territory.”
(Alfred Korzybski)

ABSTRACT

This article argues that American Studies has suffered from an exaggerated influence of formalism manifesting itself in a detached kind of ‘universal theory’ that favors abstract non-referentiality and hence irrelevance. Its concepts often originate in contexts that do not apply to the fields in which they are then applied. In an effort to unpack the history of this issue, this article outlines the genealogy of a philosophical ‘long modernism,’ originating in idealism and dialectics, traversing logical positivism, existentialism, and ending in deconstruction and several post-movements that merely ‘critique’ their ancestry rather than opt for paradigmatic change. An important common denominator of these related approaches is their phenomenological ‘perceptualist’ fallacy of trying to look at concepts directly, which fuses (and confuses) the two levels of perception and conceptualization into one, and hence ignores the psychological negotiations of cognitive construction. A hermeneutic and supposedly objectivist ‘textualist’ approach should be replaced by a pragmatist credo of contextualization and attitudes influenced by certain views of the life sciences. Conclusive examples from American literature show that the canonized writers have always commented on this issue and questioned the relationship of concepts and reality in their work.

The Impact of Global English on Linguistic Minorities in
Romania and Moldova:
Global Integration or American Cultural Imperialism?

MATTHEW CISCEL
Central Connecticut State University

ABSTRACT

The role of English as an international and European lingua franca has increased significantly in Romania and the Republic of Moldova since the end of Communist authoritarianism two decades ago. In many ways, increased knowledge and use of English for various functions in these two countries, as elsewhere, has facilitated their gradual integration into global institutions and economics. However, along with such benefits, the adoption of a global language presents certain risks. Crystal (1996:13) identifies the primary danger that, “such a language would make other languages unnecessary,” initially displacing other foreign and minority languages. This paper will draw on data about language attitudes collected in Moldova (in 2003) and Romania (in 2010) to argue that regardless of whether it is used for global integration or cultural imperialism (Phillipson 1992, 2008), the (American) English language appeals to young people in these two countries to such a degree that other minority and foreign languages are often seen as unnecessary or at least less motivating to learn. In sum, the global dominance of (American) English provides opportunities for social integration and economic growth, but it also advantages a distant foreign tongue and displaces local minority and neighboring foreign tongues.

Towards the Invocation of Pre-existing Stasis:
Maidens, Mothers and *Murderessing*
in the Emergent Video Film in Nigeria

OGAGA OKUYADE
College of Education, Warri
Delta State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The Nigerian video film class which is now regarded as “Nollywood” continues to grow with the passage of time because it provides its local audience with a visual delight of narratives which captures their prodigal desires and pains. An enterprise which began strictly for the purpose of entertainment has mushroomed into something close to a casino. Although, the enterprise continues to defy definition because its production localized, it has become so popular amongst the people considering the fact that Nigeria is now more of a “watching” society to a “reading” one. The subject of this essay is not to specifically define this filmic enterprise, but rather intends to examine an aspect of the film which borders on the asymmetric gender relations in the screening of the films. My argument is premised on the socio-cultural role of women in the Nigerian society and how their identity is distorted and contracted in films in order to justify their exclusion from crucial national issues. The films celebrate popular gender stereotypes identifiable in first- and second-generation Nigerian literature. Thus the paper maintains that this biased filmic gender practice is only an invocation of pre-existing stasis which is facilitated by the patriarchal control of the entire filmic enterprise in Nigeria.

Transatlantic Perspectives in Fiction:
D. H. Lawrence's "America"

CAMELIA ANGHEL
Romanian-American University of Bucharest

ABSTRACT

Basically relying on D. H. Lawrence's novels and short stories, the paper offers a cursory survey of the author's multi-faceted interpretations of 'America.' Pointing out the difficulty in applying a strict (positive/negative) valuation criterion when reading this mental space, we discuss the otherness of 'America' in modernist perspective, that is in terms of mobility, emancipation, psychological mutations, regained freedom, reconstructed identities. Special emphasis is placed on the author's construction of gender in his symbolic reading of a male/female 'America.'

The Metropolis as a Source of Insanity and Revelation in
J.M.G. Le Clezio's *Fever*

ANA-BLANCA CIOCOI-POP
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

A writer of avant-garde, cross-cultural, plotless, difficult to pin down novels, Le Clezio is commonly labeled a writer of exile literature. This restrictive categorization is not primarily related to Le Clezio's multi-cultural background, but rather to a certain impossibility of communication and understanding of otherness and even of the self prevalent in his novels. In the style of Forster or Melville, with Le Clezio genuine understanding (which is always of the epiphany/revelation type) can only come about under extreme circumstances, like war or insanity. Destruction and annihilation are the only gates open towards self-knowledge. Usually the resulting "revelation" is so powerful that it does not allow for a continuation of life as it was before the epiphanic moment. Genuine understanding can only accompany death, as truth is irreconcilable with the triviality of everyday life. Just as in *Le process-verbal* confinement is paradoxically the only possibility of freedom, in *Fever* insanity is the only possibility of revelation. In order to illustrate this, we have chosen three of the nine stories in *Fever* for discussion and analysis: "Fever", "The Day that Beaumont Became Acquainted with His Pain" and "Martin".

American Folk Pastimes (1607-1850):
On Route to Sport Games in the American Colonies

SORIN ȘTEFĂNESCU
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

Part of a wider endeavor meant to typify American sporting activity the present paper is an attempt to isolate the preliminary manifestations of pastimes and revelry on the North American continent, starting with 1607, the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. This is a period when many customs brought over from English village life are still very much present and alongside them some stern Puritanical attitudes have been preserved, which inhibited the growth of American sports. Nevertheless, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw countless occasions for games and festivities, such as election days, lectures, commencements or public punishments. These activities ranged from foot racing, jumping, and shooting at the mark to horse racing, cudgeling matches, fiddling contests, or wrestling matches at harvest festivals. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of *Victorianism*, which stemmed from the erosion of older social restraints, a revolution in material aspirations, and a reinvigorated Protestantism. The Victorian subculture offered substitutes for the traditional folk games, which had disappeared, in the form of the saloon, the theatre, gambling halls, and commercial sports (largely in the form of “blood” sports, professional pedestrianism or footracing, prize fighting, billiards, boat racing and the like). In fact, England continued to exercise a profound influence over the sporting life of the new nation.

The Changing Role of TB Sanatoria: From Sarnac New York
to Romania's Magic Mountains

JONATHAN J. STILLO

The City University of New York Graduate Center/SNSPA

ABSTRACT

Romania is the site of Europe's worst tuberculosis (TB) epidemic. The present rate of 109 cases per 100,000 people - compared to an EU and U.S. rates of 17 and 4, respectively, means that not only is TB a significant health risk in Romania, but also a danger for the entire region [1, 2]. Even neighboring Bulgaria has a TB rate three times lower than Romania (2). Romania is also the site of some of the world's last TB sanatoria. Nearly 20% of Romania's TB patients are chronic, having failed TB treatment (or being failed by it) at least twice. They represent a real public health danger as they may serve as "reservoirs" of dangerous strains of drug-resistant TB [3].

This paper will examine past and present roles of TB sanatoria, focusing on the U.S. and Romania, while paying special attention to the treatment of chronic and difficult patients, who often are poor, mentally ill and chemically dependent. Sanatoria in Romania are often criticized for being obsolete and inefficient, but they may also be an alternative for patients needing more comprehensive care in a country lacking adequate social welfare and case management resources.

Jane Austen's *Emma* Seen
through the Cinematic Lens

CORINA SELEJAN
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

Given the fact that more than twenty Austen-related cinematic adaptations have been released over the past fifteen years alone, the analysis of this cultural phenomenon emerges as a necessity for gaining a complex understanding of Austen's work and the way we perceive it today. Two centuries of interpretive history necessarily come to bear on any reading, be it critical or filmic, of Austen's novel *Emma*. Critical material relating to *Emma*'s being a difficult read due to its hermeneutic versatility and ambiguity has been insisted upon, as opposed to criticism with political and other than aesthetic agendas. As five cinematic adaptations of *Emma* are analysed in terms of their relationship to the novel they are based on, to literary criticism and interpretation, and to each other, adaptation emerges as steering increasingly away from mere intersemiotic 'translation' towards more and more creative interpretation, involving, at times, the displacement of the literary work from its original socio-historical and cultural context. This development is shown to have a crucial relevance to contemporary culture.

Of Drugs, Documents and Pseudo States:
The Odd Story of the Missing Broadcasting Ship

ERIC GILDER

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

MERVYN HAGGER

John Lilburne Research Institute
(for Constitutional Studies) USA

ABSTRACT

A Japanese ship was purchased by a company in Panama and impounded off the coast of the USA with an illicit cargo of drugs on board. The ship was sold by the U.S. Government for US\$100 over a public holiday under dubious circumstances. This vessel became home to a U.S. 'pirate radio' station twice, after its name, ownership and registration had been laundered more than once, and it then became the center stage prop for the climax of a major Hollywood motion picture where it was blown up. U.S. Government paperwork never explained what happened to the drugs, or the vessel, or why after destruction, the government of Panama maintained its original ship registration.

Frontier and Vast Empty Space: the Affect on the American West Psyche

SCOTT EASTMAN

Freelance

ABSTRACT

A visual journey through photos of the Salton Sea region of California serves as point of departure for a discussion about the effects of vast un- and under-inhabited places in the United States on defining the psyche of a people. This contrast and the ability to escape and also feel minute in the landscape while having the genuine need to address one's basic need for survival has helped to create an independence of thought and soul and a people that are not easily defined. California's Imperial Valley possesses a minimalism and vastness, as well as fragmentary remains of human attempts at living in and controlling the land. Vast expanses of monotonous tones and textures are punctuated by vestiges of dreams to create a utopian inland Riviera around the Salton Sea. The people who live here are rugged in the truest sense – weathered by the sun and committed to a fierce individualism.

To Enter Society or Return to Nature: Confucian and Taoist
Perspectives on Traditional Chinese Values

MINGLE GAO

Beijing Language and Culture University

ABSTRACT

The essay analyzes Confucian and Taoist perspectives on traditional Chinese values, investigating the impact that both Taoism and Confucianism has had on the minds and values of Chinese people, as they exerted a conspicuously noticeable and an enduring influence on most of the ancient and modern Chinese scholars. They even became, to some extent, a state of mind, a part of the national cultural atmosphere, rather than a set of tenets.