

# The Foreign Languages Newsletter

Clark University · Worcester, Massachusetts

<http://www.clarku.edu/departments/foreign>

Vol. XXX, No. 6 October 2009

## FROM THE CHAIR

The biggest news in Estabrook Hall this month is our expanded electronic version of the FL&L Newsletter. Additional details of stories from the print version, with relevant web links, details of lectures, conversation hours and more, is only a click away. One of the notable advantages of the electronic newsletter is that students studying abroad can have easy access to the latest department news. On campus, more information about the new Spring courses is available. A special event this month is the visit of French poet Gerard Camoin, who will present public readings of his work and in early November participate in a poetry slam in French with students. Follow this and other Foreign Languages activities in coming issues. Cheers!

**Marvin D'Lugo**

**POET GERARD CAMOIN VISITS THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT; POETRY 'SLAM' IN NOVEMBER.** October 19 to November 6, contemporary French poet **G rard Camoin** comes to campus for a short residency. He will participate in a project run by Associate Professor Michael Spingler (French), called "Using Poetry to teach French." In an in-class poetry workshop, Camoin will work with students on polishing and revising their texts. His goal, he says, is to foster their appreciation of the language's sonority, rhythm and musicality. He notes: "Aside from meaning there is music: the beating of the heart, the rhythm of footsteps, the breath of the wind, a sigh, all that is the rhythm and melody of language. I would like the students to grasp this with their minds and hearts." Spingler has been using Camoin's poetry in his classes for about 4 years with very enthusiastic student response.

Spingler says: "This year, in anticipation of Camoin's arrival, I 'upped the ante,' having students compose their own poems, many of which are surprisingly good. I suggested that Camoin give a reading of his poetry, but he had a better idea: a 'poetry slam' (*soir e de po sie*) in which students will read their own poems. He will also read some of his own works, but he quite rightly believes that the focus should be on the students. It should be their evening."

The French poetry slam takes place **Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm, in the Higgins Lounge in Dana Commons.** All are invited.

## FROM ONE CORNER OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING WORLD TO ANOTHER: A PERUVIAN AND A SPANIARD IN ESTABROOK HALL

**Visiting Lecturer Luisa-Maria Rojas-Rimachi**, who is Peruvian, recently interviewed **Visiting Part-time Lecturer Maria Jesus Hernandez**, who comes to the Foreign Languages Department from the language school Tandem in Madrid, Spain. They discussed their respective experiences and observations.

**Rojas-Rimachi:** Maria Jesus, we speak the same language, but would you say we share the same culture?

**Hernandez:** We share many things, but the spirit of the Spaniards is very much related to a probable exaggerated pride. We certainly don't show off too much this pride within our country, but abroad it emerges 'spontaneously'. Latin America, as heterogeneous as it is, or Spanish America to be more specific, shares the same kind of habits and beliefs we have been transmitting from one generation to the other. In other words, we share a joy of life, colorful food, body language and a way of looking at others, and for us, the family is still the center of our social life, but this is changing.



**Maria Jesus Hernandez**

**Rojas-Rimachi:** What is the main difference between Spaniards and the Latin Americans you know, and what would you say about the people from the United States?

**Hernandez:** We tend to be more direct, more straightforward. Our way of talking is less wordy and we sound bossy very often.

Certainly, we share this feature with the South Americans from Argentina at times. Beyond the ethnic aspect, the main differences are based on our discourse. Regarding the people from the United States, specifically the people from New England, I find them extremely kind and, sometimes, I feel overwhelmed and skeptical by that kindness.

**Rojas-Rimachi:** What is your impression of Clark University and Worcester in general?

**Hernandez:** Well, the class dynamics gave me a sort of "cultural shock" at the beginning. At the university level, in Spain the relationship between instructors and students is

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quite distant. I feel the student here is very sheltered while in the Spanish-speaking world, because this not only happens in Spain, the student needs to be on his or her own from the very beginning. Autonomy is, probably, the most visible difference. There is also a more horizontal relationship between instructors and students. The attitude is more paternalistic in Spain which is mainly related to the authority of knowledge. Worcester is a 'peculiar' city with a rhythm of its own. I am surprised with the few pedestrians you normally find in the street and the scattered night life. Coming from a big city, I find Worcester a very quiet place. It takes a while to discover interesting places to have a good coffee or things to do.

**Rojas-Rimachi:** For me, Worcester is a surprising place in terms of the use of Spanish. What is this telling you?

**Hernandez:** Taking into consideration the size of the city, I am surprised about the number of Spanish-speaking people in Worcester, but also I am very impressed with the great interest in the Spanish language and culture here as well as the food we eat. I am amazed about the fact of being able to live in Spanish in this city!

**Rojas-Rimachi:** One of these days I'll invite you to explore the Peruvian food 'sector' of Worcester. Then, you will need to add Indigenous and African ingredients to the flavor of the Peninsula.

## TWO NEW COURSES FOR SPRING 2010

The Foreign Languages Department presents two new courses for the spring semester:

**German 286: Germans, Jews and Turks**

Prof. Robert Tobin, Henry J Leir Chair in Foreign Languages and Cultures, Mondays -Wednesdays 4:15- 5:30. "This class will study the expression of cultural identity in central European literature. How have people in central Europe come to think of themselves or others as 'Germans,' 'Jews,' 'Turks,' or some combinations thereof? While the Holocaust is clearly central to the German-Jewish relationship, it is not the only focus of this course—we will also study the emancipation of the Jews in the German-speaking world, German-Jewish assimilation and symbiosis, the rise of anti-Semitism and Zionism, as well as attempts to remember the Holocaust. We will also study the emergence of Turkish culture in the German-speaking world and conclude with reflections on Germany today as a multicultural nation."

**French 164: The Francophone Caribbean**

Odile Ferly, Assistant Prof. (French). Tuesdays-Fridays 1:25. "An examination of the societies, cultures, and writing from Haiti and the French Caribbean (Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guyana). The course looks at Francophone Caribbean societies, their relationship with France both in cultural and political terms, the main socio-cultural challenges these societies face today, as well as the literary canon of the region. Conducted in French."

**Emily Brenner '07 ( Theater Arts and French)** works at the *Alliance Francaise* (French Library) in Boston. She writes: "My official title is Education Administrator. The Library has the second-largest collection of French books, films and music in the United States. I work in the Education department where we offer group classes, workshops, and private lessons for adults and children of all ages and levels. I register adults and children for classes, organize private lessons between teachers and students, work on marketing and promoting our programs and collecting data from students once their classes are completed."

## FACULTY IN PRINT

**Prof. Marvin D'Lugo, Chair, Foreign Languages Department**, recently published a chapter in *World Cinemas: Transnational Perspectives* edited by Kathleen Newman and Natasa Durovicova. London: Routledge and American Institute, 2009: 160-185). The chapter is entitled: 'Aural Identity, Genealogies of Sound Technologies and Hispanic Transnationality.'

**Associate Professor Beth Gale** published an article "Ni rebelles ni soumises: les presque révoltées du roman d'adolescence en France" in *Portraits de jeunes filles: images de l'adolescence féminine dans la littérature et le cinéma français et francophone*, a volume edited by Daniela Di Cecco. The book was just published in Paris by L'Harmattan.

**Visiting Assistant Professor Wendy Wagner (German)** has published an article about the positive effect of classical music on learning foreign languages. In the Fall 2009 edition of "The Exchange," the Newsletter of the New England Faculty Development Consortium (NEFDC), in an article entitled "Suggestopedia: Sonatas Center Students." Wagner writes: "My own experience in higher education suggests that if sonatas are played when students enter the classroom, the music sets a welcoming atmosphere, calms students and sharpens their focus on learning. It also expands their cultural awareness. Student performance in my German classes has been higher with sonatas as a soundtrack than when I taught in environments which did not allow me the use of classical music." More information about Wagner's article, including her recommended list of composers and sonatas, is available at the department's web page, [www.clarku.edu/departments/foreign/news](http://www.clarku.edu/departments/foreign/news).

## FACULTY CALENDAR

**October 28, Prof Marvin D'Lugo** will give a lecture, "Mexican Musical Genre Films of the 1940's" at Stony Brook University. More information is available at [www.sunysb.edu/humanities](http://www.sunysb.edu/humanities). **November 6** he will participate in a conference on "Geographic Imaginaries & Hispanic Film," at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, reading a paper entitled: "Of Brothels and Boleros: The Sound of Peripheral Modernity in Mexican Film." Information on this conference is available at: [http://stonecenter.tulane.edu/articles/by\\_tag/Film](http://stonecenter.tulane.edu/articles/by_tag/Film).