

# NEWSLETTER

OGSCL Fall 2005



I first got involved with GEO in the fall of 2004. My partner, Micah, had been attending some meetings in regard with the future of our baby, Aureliano. After hearing a couple of his comments, I myself started attending these meetings even though in the beginning I was not a formal member of GEO. My insatiable thirst for justice and improvement in the communities where I live made me become quite active. And then I took that step I was consciously avoiding but unconsciously preparing for: I became the OGSCL steward for GEO.

## ***no contract, no peace and the power of the united***

By Antonia Carcelén Estrada

The subsequent semester had nothing but dry wood to ignite my inner fire. The administration was threatening the union with such an unfair treatment that the working conditions for our fellow TAs and RAs were about to match those of the early 80s, that is more than 20 years of the union's accomplishments to be overturned. The administration proposed the following: you want healthcare, pay for it; work more hours, no raise on the horizon; you have a child, tough luck, you chose to be a grad student; and, you are gay, then no family benefits for you. These were all unfair cutbacks from an administration that knows more about business than about education.

In a democratic society, these conditions seemed outrageous to me and to the other thousands who would be directly affected—GEO represents the interest of more than 2,500 students. And so we decided that no matter how organized the administration was, and no matter how many resources they counted on, the power of the people could do more than them. Many small actions took place, and the administration showed no respect or fear to our demands. Our organization grew stronger and united as more and more students became ready for war if necessary, not as a manifestation of disappointment but as a simple matter of financial survival. One of the largest marches UMass has ever seen took place on the 31st of March 2005: over 600 UMass graduate employees, undergraduates, faculty, staff, community members, and local labor leaders marched their way through the campus and piled up traffic as the march crossed North Pleasant and Massachusetts Avenue crosswalks a half dozen times. Their signed petitions were delivered at Lombardi's office as they chanted through Whitmore.

Despite such manifestation of unity and will to achieve our petitions attracting most regional media, the administration showed little response to the event. Our indignation grew larger, and the next step had to be taken: 21 days later, and with our little energy left, GEO activists organized all grad students to boycott classes. While the classrooms were dead, the student union could not be more alive as grad students came from all sides of campus showing their strength through unity. Barbara Ehrenreich, our dear Professor David Lenson, Howard Zinn, and other prominent people showed their support as our fellow students from Yale came to ask for guidance in their own struggle. Undergraduate students came to support their teachers and joined them in the picket lines.

see page 2



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## a message from the editors

As two new students, we accepted to work on the OGSCSCL newsletter without the slightest idea of what it would entail! The process was long and sometimes rather hazardous, but we did enjoy many aspects of it. To see the newsletter develop from 4 pages to 10 pages was a treat in itself. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that we bring you the latest OGSCSCL Newsletter. We have tried to include several fields of intellectual engagement, ranging from poetry to informative pieces. We would like to thank everyone who gave us their creative and critical writings and helped us along the path. We would also like to thank Linda Papirio for her help during the printing process.

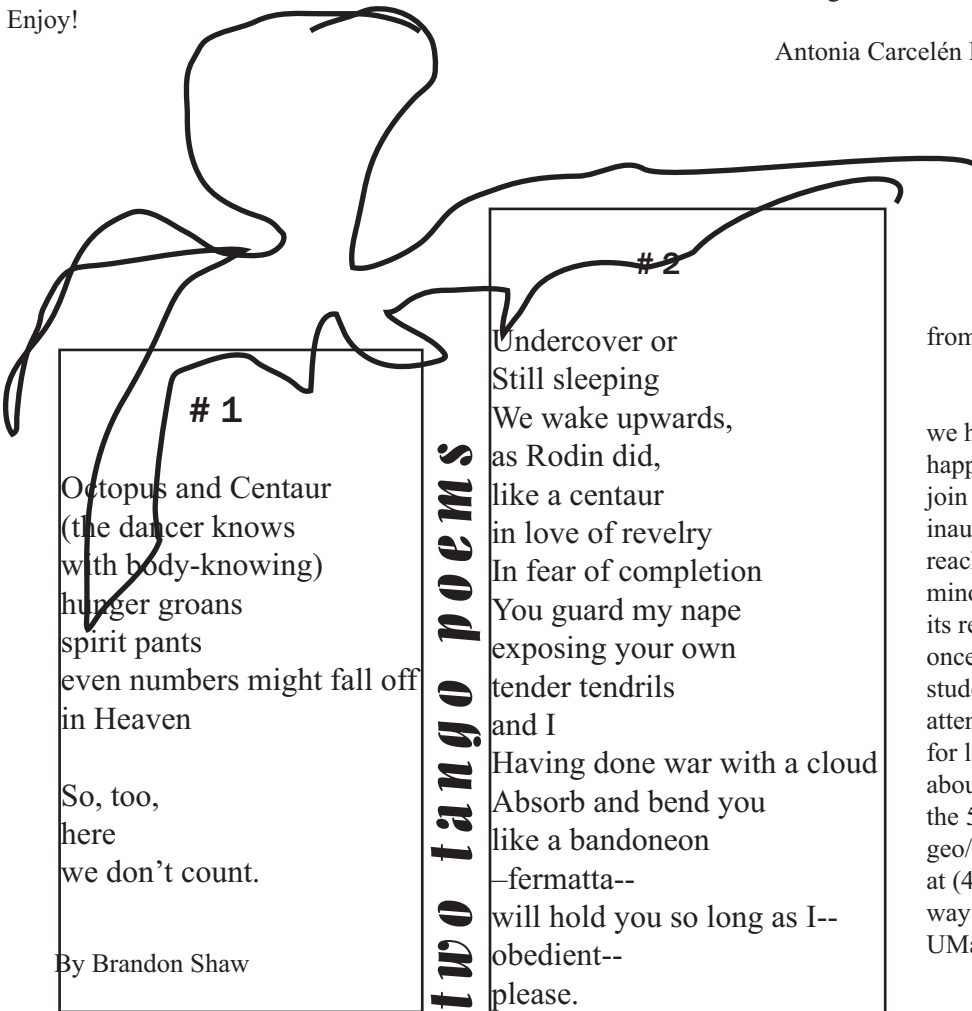
This is also a good moment to emphasize the relative success our graduate organization has had on the past year. Some of us are now enrolled in what a year ago seemed like a dream and an urge: "Pro-seminar: The Discipline and its Discontents," conducted by Prof. Nerissa Balce, a recently welcomed faculty member. The "Interdisciplinary Dialogues" have also started with a successful turnout and its sweet wine flavor.

In this issue, our Chair, Prof. William Moebius, goes into a discussion of the field of Comparative Literature. The Graduate Program Director, Prof. Catherine Portuges gives us an overview of the new students and the students who graduated and received awards. Erica Walch provides the reader with useful information about practical issues on literary and "technical" translation. The article by Antonia Carcelén talks about the victory of GEO after 14 months of negotiation with the University administration to establish new working conditions. Brandon Shaw invites us to a taste of Tango through his poetry. In "From Mexican Notebook," estheR Cuesta recalls with mixed feelings her experience of going to Mexico and reuniting herself with Latin America. "What is on the Other Side?" by Kanchuka Dharmasiri offers a critique of *Fronteras Desviadas/ Deviant Borders*, a play by Dora Arreola and Andrea Assaf. Prateeti Ballal provides us a detailed account of the New Faculty Lecture Series.

Please feel free to learn about other OGSCSCLers' achievements through their Bios.

Enjoy!

Antonia Carcelén Estrada and Kanchuka Dharmasiri



# 1

Octopus and Centaur  
 (the dancer knows  
 with body-knowing)  
 hunger groans  
 spirit pants  
 even numbers might fall off  
 in Heaven

So, too,  
 here  
 we don't count.

By Brandon Shaw

two tango poems

# 2

Undercover or  
 Still sleeping  
 We wake upwards,  
 as Rodin did,  
 like a centaur  
 in love of revelry  
 In fear of completion  
 You guard my nape  
 exposing your own  
 tender tendrils  
 and I  
 Having done war with a cloud  
 Absorb and bend you  
 like a bandoneon  
 –fermatta--  
 will hold you so long as I--  
 obedient--  
 please.

....continued

from page 1

The administration gave up, and we have now a fair contract. This could only happen after Senator Kennedy offered to join the picket lines at President Wilson's inauguration if a settlement had not been reached. UMass Amherst is still a place for minorities. GEO has once more showed its restless work for its members and has once more been an example for the nation's student unions. My son, Aureliano, is now attending UCC which remained affordable for low income families. To learn more about your working conditions, please read the 5th contract at <http://people.umass.edu/geo/gp/contract.html>, or call the GEO office at (413) 545-0705. A new campaign is on its way; please remain active for the future of UMass grad students.

It may seem transparent, but the cloak of Comparative Literature those of us who practice it wear seems to evoke the twilight zone. "What do I tell my parents?" a new major asked me recently, but she was not the only one asking for a clear one-two punch definition of the discipline. What I usually answer is "the study of literature as an international phenomenon, based in intensive study of languages and cultures other than one's own" and that usually fills the cup to the brim. My experience tells me that Comparative Literature is much more than that, just as a good poem is a lot more than any definition of a poem.

This semester our new faculty colleague Professor Nerissa Balce offers a proseminar on Comparative Literature and its Discontents, while our graduate students have organized a lecture series involving new faculty in various programs that intersect with studies in Comparative Literature. Meanwhile, Johns Hopkins University is about to publish the latest report on the discipline, for which Haun Saussy of Yale will be the principal spokesperson. At the same time, the Provost and our Dean, Lee R. Edwards, have enjoined all of the units of the new Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures to undergo a quality assessment review in 2005-2006, culminating in a site visit by a review team consisting of prominent scholars on the national scene. Most recently, John Lombardi, Chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, has notified the faculty, in a speech given to a faculty convocation on September 16, 2005, that he is undertaking an assessment of faculty and program quality. As the founder of The Lombardi Program on Measuring University Performance at the University of Florida, it should come as no surprise that Lombardi also serves as co-editor of the Top American Research Universities project on measuring university performance. The first task in this performance evaluation is to have each unit set forth its own criteria for assessment. As Lombardi put, "is it enough to have a copy of your poem published on your mother's refrigerator?"

The definition of what we do in Comparative Literature "entails" (a figure from law or fashion?) the question of how well we do what we do, of whether the mantle fits, and whether what we stage as Comparative Literature on this campus matches the best performances in the discipline in the world. I say "world," because UMass Amherst can either become the "global university" it has the potential to be, or it can sink back into a sort of familiar east coast mist. To judge, first, from the quality of our students, both undergraduate and graduate, what we do is "world-class." What my faculty colleagues have written, spoken about and teach should and does warrant the attention and respect of the international community. And who are my faculty colleagues?

## *letter from the chair*

Comparative Literature does not exist in a vacuum. Just as English hovers at the edge of Communications, and Philosophy looks over its shoulder at Linguistics and Computer Science, Comparative Literature has to take its measure not only from the prominent achievements of its core faculty, but also from those of its associated faculty in related units. No student can major in Comparative Literature without studying literature in at least two languages, only one of which can be English in its many dialects. No graduate student can be credentialed for the job market in Comparative Literature without a fairly extensive knowledge of the histories of two or more literatures, even if the special focus of that student's work lies in the cinematic universe. Our special relationship with other units (including political science, history, anthropology, art and music) enables us to place our students in research projects of broader scope, within which they can serve as integrators and pathfinders.

For fresh examples of how Comparative Literature constructs itself on our campus, let me just point out the credentials of our most recently appointed faculty, Professors Balce, Hicks and Couch. Professor Balce brings with her impressive credentials in the field of ethnic studies (Ph.D., U. of California, Berkeley), with a special emphasis on Filipino language (Tagalog), culture, diaspora, and history and Asian American literatures. She is currently offering a graduate seminar in "Travel and Empire" as well as the proseminar "The Discipline and its Discontents." Professor Hicks directs a State Department-funded special program in American studies at Smith College for faculty from Sarajevo, and with a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the U. of Pennsylvania, offers a course for us in literary theory, a course on reenvisionings of *The Tempest* in the post-colonial era, and, informed by his experience in Sarajevo, a course on war stories. Professor Couch comes to us armed with a doctorate in Art History (Pre-Columbian) from Columbia University, and offers courses this semester in Aztec manuscripts, the graphic novel in North America, and international science fiction. One can't help noticing that each of these new faculty in his or her own way step over the fault lines that have isolated literary studies from cultural and linguistic contexts. I'm very pleased to welcome each of these new colleagues to our midst. Finally, let us all acknowledge again, with thanks, the achievements and contributions of Professor Lucien Miller, who retired in January, 2005, and whose warm presence and expertise is much missed.

Before closing, I would like to single out for honorable mention three of our graduate students who, over the past year, have done so much to enliven the spirit and horizons of Comparative Literature by organizing international conferences and lecture series. To Prateeti Ballal, estheR Cuesta, and Juan Ramos, a hearty round of applause. Let me also recognize those graduate students who have won university fellowships for 2005-2006, Ada McKenzie, Enrique Garcia, and BK Tuon, and not overlook the prestigious Mellon Dissertation Fellowship won in 2004-2005 by Prateeti Ballal. There is really nothing quite like our Comparative Literature community on this campus. Perhaps we should start wearing specially designed robes. Our exciting new website design, thanks to Daniel Pope, is just the beginning.

Prof. William Moebius

## **new faculty lecture series: interdisciplinary dialogues**

By Prateeti Balaal

The Organization of Graduate Students in Comparative Literature (OGSCL) invites you to our fall new faculty lecture series. There are several new faculty members at the university, and we look forward to learning from their current and stimulating research. Speakers will include practical advice for graduate students in their lectures. Since many new faculty members have recently gone through the process of finishing dissertations and going on the job market, hearing about their experience should be valuable.

The lectures will be on alternate Thursdays at 4:15 pm in 301 Herter Hall.

The schedule is as follows:

- September 15, 2005, Jennifer Adams, English, “(Re)Moving the King: Medieval Chess and the Ideals of Civic Order”
- September 29, 2005, Amanda C. Seaman, Asian Languages and Literatures, “Literature of the Low Fertility Era in Japan”
- October 13, 2005, Julio Velez-Sainz, Spanish and Portuguese, “Philogyny and Its Detractors: The Quarrel About Women in Medieval Culture (A Neomedievalist Approach)”
- October 27, 2005, James Smethurst, Afro-American Studies, “From Reconstruction to Renaissance: African American Literature and Modernity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century”
- November 3, 2005, Suzanne Daly, English, “The Clerk’s Tale: Characterizing the Middle in ‘Dombey and Son’”
- November 17, 2005, Richard T. Chu, History, “The Chinese Diaspora in the Philippines: Negotiating Identity and Nationhood”
- December 1, 2005, Guillermo B. Irizarry, Spanish and Portuguese, “Latin Kings of Comedy: Negotiating Cultural Space in Stand-Up Comedy”

The objectives of the new faculty lecture series include the following:

- To foster dialogue across disciplinary boundaries
- To provide a forum for new faculty to present their research in an informal and collegial setting
- To encourage discussion and forge new connections between faculty and graduate students
- To enrich graduate interdisciplinary work through exposure to scholarship within and outside one’s field
- To present the academic resources available to graduate students at UMass.

All lectures are FREE and open to the public.

**cupidity chez thomas**

Goddammit.  
I’d love to be somewhere else.  
Derived out of seemliness  
Like filagree  
Buttressing with terror and beauty

with wings  
launched out of my rational essence  
Braided attributiva hanging in non-redundant  
rows  
Still on my tresses  
Mute and sexless  
Hearing the  
patient aglets make love to the virgin eyelets  
These passionate beings out there  
Curtaining their porous bodies  
with dead cotton,  
buckled with their physics.

My will the tint of the predicates  
the aroma of their inelastic systematicity

My will a copula  
wedding the ancient variables  
silent for homonyms, trompe d’oile, scented  
gravity  
eroding neuro-synapses.

My will too a symbol  
And apostolic function  
Prisiming complexity and regularity

-Brandon Shaw

## **conti fellowship in the faculty**

Prof. Maria Tymoczko has been awarded one of the three annual Samuel F. Conti Faculty Fellowship Awards. The award consists of a year leave to encourage faculty to excel in creative work, graduate education, research, and scholarly attainment. Prof. Tymoczko is now working on three new publications, one of which relates to the work done on a graduate seminar. *Engagement and the Novel* is a critical analysis of the narratives of García Marquez, Morrison, Joyce, and Faulkner. Whether it was this project or her ongoing research work—Prof. Tymoczko has had six publications in five years—that got her the award, she explains that she could not have done it without her students. Congratulations Prof. Tymoczko!!



# literary translation

By Erica Walch

To publish a literary translation, you must follow certain steps.

1. Get permission from the publisher of the original text. You need permission if: (a) the author is alive, (b) the author has been dead for less than 50 years. If a translation of the work has been published in the language you plan to use, then the translator who published that edition has the rights to the text for 50 years. It is normally the publisher, not the author, who holds the translation rights, so (unless you know the author and s/he can help you with the publisher) go straight to the publisher.

2. Once you have the right to translate, contact a publisher in the language you want to publish in. Include a cover letter that: (a) tells who you are, (b) identifies the market, (c) identifies any specific translation strategy you will use, (d) indicates that you have the translation rights. You should also include a sample of your translation work (about 20 pages of prose or a selection of 4-5 poems if it's poetry). This should all be sent on paper in the mail and include a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of materials.

3. Wait. They may take several months to contact you (as many as nine, in which time you can conceive and give birth to a child).

4. If you get a book deal, you can try to negotiate for an advance, but normally you don't get paid until the full book is completed and published. The rate of pay is around 5 cents per word.

It used to be that one couldn't submit the same item to multiple journals for publication simultaneously. However, this is now changing. If you are doing a multiple submission, you should indicate that to each publisher in the cover letter (#2 above).

You can use "Index Translationum" (1970-present online, 1930's-1970 in print at Umass) to find if a text you're interested in has been published as a translation. You can also look into the "Literary Marketplace" for recent publications (subscription cost involved). They both have really long web addresses, so you're better off to just google the names. Prof. Gentzler also gave the following list of journals and presses that publish translations:

Journals	Presses
Metamorphoses	Arte Publico
Exchanges	Aunt Lute
Translation (Columbia)	City Lights
Two Lines	BOA
Translation and Literature	Copper Canyon
Burnside Review (poetry)	Curbstone
Carolina Quarterly	Univ. of Nebraska Press
Kenyon Review	New Directions (Duke Univ.
Jubilate (Umass)	Press)
Black Warrior Review	
Iowa Review	
Massachusetts Review	

On Monday, April 11, 2005, Prof. Edwin Gentzler presented a workshop on many of the career aspects of translation. Approximately 20 people attended; many were CompLit graduate students, and some were students and professors from other departments. Some people who were unable to attend asked for a synopsis of what was presented. What follows is an attempt to share the information Prof. Gentzler gave us.

They don't pay, but are good to have on your resume/publication history.

Professional organizations that are recommended for a literary translator to join are: NETA (New England Translator's Association), ALTA (American Literary Translators Association), and PEN.

## "Technical" Translators

"Technical" translation usually refers to everything that is not "Literature" (with a capital L).

The most usual way for technical translators to get work is by registering with a translation agency (or getting a full-time in-house job with a specific government agency, commercial or non-profit institution). To register with a translation agency, Prof. Gentzler recommends you chose one or two, go in person to meet them and introduce yourself to project managers or agency directors.

The professional organization that is recommended for technical translators to join is ATA (American Translation Association), but one could find organizations dedicated to one's area of specialization that would also prove quite helpful.

Unless you are very wealthy and have something to lose, you probably don't need liability insurance. However, if you create a stamp that says something to the effect of:

Translation is an inexact science. I certify that I have translated this document to the best of my ability. I am not liable for any misunderstanding that arises as a result of this translation.

You may be able to save yourself from potential lawsuits. Pay for technical translators varies widely and is constantly going down. If you find an agency that pays well, you should stick with them!

In the U.S. there is no special certification for translators. The ATA certification is seen by Gentzler as a test of minimal skills. But it is out there, and some agencies only accept ATA certified translators. Talk to people in your language pair who are ATA certified to see if they think it is worthwhile.





# what is on the other side?

By Kanchuka Dharmasiri

*“Qué hay en el otro lado?*

*- On the other side, there are other colors, otros sabores, other sounds, lenguajes, mixings. The hybridity that everybody has, y lo distinto que es cada quien.”*  
(*Fronteras Desviadas/Deviant Borders*)

What is on the other side? The other side of what? The Mexican-American border? A series of questions are posed as two women enact a struggle to cross a barrier on stage. They crash into each other several times, and finally one melts to the ground. Dora Arriola (director) and Andrea Assaf’s (writer/compiler) *Fronteras Desviadas/ Deviant Borders* is a play that captures the plight of female sex-workers living in the Mexican-American border, in Tijuana, better known as TJ. The play is a critique of the complicity of those who are in power, at home and abroad, in the continuation of the exploitation of these women.

El Chamuco, or the little devil (played by Raquel Almazan) introduces the spectators to the pleasures that one can experience in Tijuana. Taken from existing websites, the speeches of Chamuco dehumanize the women and depict them as consumer goods. Opposed to his macho language, the roles of the women (played by Dora Arreola and Maria Vale) are predominated by movement (complemented by Kathy Couch’s lighting), dance, music and poetry. Arreola’s choreography becomes powerful when one of the women falls down and lies motionless on stage with wide open eyes and mouth. Her inaction, or silent action, comes out strongly against the endless words that ChamWhile problematizing the dichotomy(here/there,

*Fronteras Desviadas* was one of the plays that New WORLD Theater brought onto stage this summer. The play dealt with issues such as exploitation, power, sexuality, and deviance. Arreola and Assaf perceive the performance as a form of activism, to create awareness

among the spectators about the situation in Tijuana. In fact, the post-show discussion generated ideas about sex-workers, maquiladoras, and the hundreds of women who disappeared and were murdered in Juárez. *Fronteras Desviadas* thus becomes an attempt to carry the viewer to the other side (the concept is relative; it depends on where one stands), and to show the troubled complexity of the other side.

*“The other side of you is me, y tú estas dentro de mí.*

*What is on the other side is the contradiction of this side, a subaltern river. Un río subalterno. Just the old with a new dress- the masquerade of contemporaneity”*

While problematizing the dichotomy(here/there, self/other), the play likewise questions the political power structures that continue to oppress and exploit certain groups of people.

In the play, El Chamuco, the narrator was the only character with a name. The women on stage, though powerful in their presence were nameless. Some of their culturally specific gestures remained incomprehensible to the audience members who were not familiar with Mexican rituals. As a result, Chamuco’s character came out with more clarity than the roles of the women. In fact, how can a director make the audience comprehend culturally specific signs in live theater? How does a play based on a particular socio-cultural milieu translate into a different context? How does *Fronteras Desviadas*, which encompasses Mexican rituals and specific cultural traditions adapt to an American audience? Or, does this space (which is not immediately decipherable) become a necessity in a process that is intent on creating awareness of a different cultural and socio-political condition? These are challenges facing the director and the translator. *Fronteras Desviadas*, which was predominately in Spanish when performed in Mexico, came to American viewers as a predominately English play. The bilingualism of the play further contributes to the discussion on translation, both linguistic and cultural.

The play made the spectators question and think. It opened up a space to discuss issues related to contemporary political power and how they affect the lives of women in a global level. *Fronteras Desviadas* made us reflect on the “other side.” What is the next step?



# from mexican notebook

By estheR Cuesta

I get out of immigration. Then, customs. Somehow it feels like I'm reliving Chapter 4 of the Capretz French book that yellows on my shelf...I know the procedure. But, at the same time, it feels so new, so unfamiliar. Perhaps the experience itself, or, rather, the lack of it, breaks the notions I've had of these procedures.

I'm entering Mexico. Mexico City, El D.F. I've been here before. I've done this somehow, but from a different point of origin. This time, I'm entering from the North. El Norte. Este norte where thousands (millions?) still want to come...and many die in the way...like the 99 or so Ecuadorians who drowned in the Pacific of August. The warehouse door was locked. No life-guards. No bodies found. To enlist the gross list of the disappeared.

This time. No questions asked...well, only...how long are you staying in Mexico? Two weeks. OK. Enjoy your stay in Mexico, and I move on. I move on...and suddenly, I'm reliving Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*, from a place I never even nightmares about.

Now, on the streets, I feel...safer...in unknown known territory...I've come to el re-encuentro. América Latina is no longer in the imaginary, the memories, the childhood, the first kiss, the old friends.

It's a sweet mango bought at Walmart  
The 2000-peso bill that appeared in my 2005 wallet

While entangled smells pull me to Calle Ecuador

The missing years at the Rectory of la UNAM  
Standing where Trotsky was fatally wounded

Tlatelolco does not forget sus estudiantes masacrados  
Y los de la Sierra de Guadalupe still  
believe in the possibility of change.



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## and us, the people

### Emir Benli

I graduated from Bogazici University, Turkey- Department of Western Languages and Literatures with a B.A. in English Literature. My areas of interest are film studies, literary theory, continental philosophy, esp. 19th and 20th Century German thought and culture.

### María Antonia Carcelén

Antonia is in her second semester in the Ph.D. Program in Comparative Literature. She is currently interested in the Humanities and Social Sciences as her area of specialization, as well as Literary Translation. She presented two versions of her paper "Covert and Overt Ideologies in the Translation of the Wycliffe Bible into Huao Terero" fitted for two different audiences, one in Binghamton-Amherst Translation Conference and the other in the graduate students conference "Our Research Matters" at UMass Amherst. Antonia is currently working towards publication, to be announced when it is printed (this is to avoid bad luck for those among us who are superstitious).

### estheR Cuesta

This summer I presented the paper "‘Estamos mejor fuera del país’: la diáspora de la mujer ecuatoriana en España desde mediados de los 90." ["‘We Are Better Off Outside Our Country’: Diasporic Ecuadorian Women in Spain Since the Mid-1990s"] in Women and Globalization Conference. Center for Global Justice. San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. I'm currently working as a teaching assistant at Smith College, where I teach two sections of Elementary Spanish. It feels nice to work three blocks away from home!!! I haven't lived that in years!!!

### Kanchuka Dharmasiri

The speed in which the first year at UMass went by is unbelievable. With courses, papers, T.A. work, meeting amazing people, working with New WORLD Theatre, presenting a paper in a conference for the first time, traveling, and getting accustomed to a different pace of life, time just flew by. Many of the experiences were challenging, and some extremely inspiring. Overall, my life as a first year graduate student in the Program of Comparative Literature has been very positive.

### **Nikolina Dobрева**

Between wedding ceremonies, receptions, and honeymoon trips, Nikolina has been desperately trying to finish her comprehensive exams, so that she can start on the much more difficult and time-consuming process of dissertation writing. When not working on the comps, Nikolina has been teaching, going to the movies, and playing video games (Jade Empire is her latest addiction).

### **Lan Dong**

Lan Dong is writing her dissertation.

### **Caroline Dothee**

So far, 2005 has been quite a productive year for me. Still in the process of writing my dissertation on the Flemish literary representations of Brussels, I presented portions of two of my chapters at the "In Other Wor(l)ds: Crossing Borders" Colloquium at Indiana University, Bloomington in April and at the "EuroVions: Crossing Disciplines, Crossing Boundaries" Conference at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in May. Encouraged by the interesting and valuable comments that I received at both conferences, I embarked on a summer of writing in Amherst rather than going home to Belgium as I usually do. While the weather proved hot, hazy and humid, I quite enjoyed Amherst during the summer and beside all the work I managed to get done, I was able to relax a bit and make time for the things I love like listening to Czech classical music, reading Nicholas Murray's biography of Kafka, going for a delicious ice cream at Bart's and spending time with friends. Now that the summer is over and a new semester is upon us, I wish everyone a happy and productive Fall.

### **Lilian Feitosa**

I am still ABD\* at this point, not only ABD but away from campus, and mothering two young ones (Kelvin's 3, Linton one in May), which makes it even harder to quit the ABD status. I'm glad to know, though, that I'm in excellent company (we should schedule a big play date/party for those CompLit babies, shouldn't we?). Anyway, as far as academic matters go, I went to the MLA just because it was here in Philly (it was great to see Bill, Beverly, and Neil there). The event got me a bit motivated, and made me submit a paper for publication in the following week but, alas, it was not accepted. Hopefully the reviews will help me write a better paper/papers in the future -- I'll try to remain optimistic. Right now I'm hoping for lots of good news from other OGSCLees and their updates, such as: all recent graduates or graduating got a job, all who were hoping to graduate or defend will, etc... So I'll have more hope for the future.

(\*all but dissertation -- if anyone's not familiar with the term :)

### **Ting Guo**

Before she came to the UMass Translation Center, Ting Guo studied Linguistics & Applied Linguistics in Central South University in China and worked as a part time translator in a translation company for three years. There, business and civil engineering documents accounted for a major part. Ting is now pursuing an MA in Translation Studies and working as a research assistant in the Translation Center.

### **Enrique Garcia**

This summer Enrique did extensive research for his future book on fandom and what he calls "the Don Quixote complex" by going to a Star Trek Convention in Las Vegas. The rest of the time he has been working on his dissertation on recent Cuban cinema. He is hoping to complete the dissertation soon, since he is on a fellowship this year, and doesn't have to teach. In his free time Enrique watches movies, plays volleyball, and spends time with his wife, now that his carefree life as a bachelor has ended.

### **Revan Jajjow Hedo**

Revan is a native speaker of Aramaic. He also speaks Arabic and English. He graduated in 2000 with a degree in translation and simultaneous interpreting. After six academic months at the University of Oregon, Revan came to UMass to continue his education. He is now a graduate student in the MA in Translation Studies program and mainly works on English and Arabic translation at the Translation Center.

### **Peter Kahn**

Peter Kahn is working towards a Ph.D. in Latin American Literature at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Meanwhile, looking forward to 2006, he hopes and expects to see published his translations of Andrea Giunta's, *The Vanguard, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine Art in the 1960s*, (Duke University Press) and stories by Elvira Orpheé, Esther Cross, and Tununa Mercado in the anthology, *Women and Power in Argentine Fiction (1950-2005): Stories, Interviews and Essays* (University of Texas Press).

### **Elena Langdon**

The past year has meant never-ending changes for me, but as my mother says "life is movement," and I am lucky that all of the changes have been exciting and forward-looking. I am currently working on my new thesis topic, which is a translation into English of a novel by the Brazilian playwright, author, and journalist Nelson Rodrigues. I expect to finish by the Fall semester (yes, I am being vague on purpose). I represented UMass as a NAJIT scholar in the association's annual conference in Washington, D.C. Currently I am teaching an class entitled "Simultaneous Interpreting Techniques."

### **Ada McKenzie**

Well, last year was a whirlwind for me. I taught for the first time, as a T.A. for Professor Lenson in *Brave New Worlds*, and then as an instructor for *International Short Story*. (I had a great time doing both). In addition, I took my comprehensives at the end of February, and defended my prospectus at the close of the semester in May. I then took a much-needed break during the summer, and pursued a variety of incongruous activities including: traveling, spending time with my family, working (sort-of) at a charter school in Springfield, and staying put in lovely Amherst. Things ended too soon (as usual), but now I am getting excited to begin writing on possessive feminine spirits in Caribbean literature and visual culture. Let's hope I'm not one of them by the end.

### **Amanda Minervini**

Amanda is enrolled at UMass as a M.A. student. She earned her B.A. with honors in Arts&Humanities at Università di Bari, Italy. She is inclined towards researching Italian and Anglo-American contemporary novels, movies, plays; contamination of literary genres and presence of other media in literature; visual imagery; use and re-elaboration of clichés. What she really researches is a different story.

**Daniel Pope**

I'm finishing coursework, realizing that I need to form a committee, choose exam topics, attend conferences, publish, receive prestigious international awards, etc.; and when I'm not studying or teaching, my time these days is mostly filled up with baby spurts—growth spurts, a variety of spurts in diapers, projectile milk spurts, etc. While these are all very fascinating and keep the family busy, my academic interests lie a bit farther afield: cinema, image/word texts, and travel narratives/tropes of travel in narrative. Can these all come together in a dissertation topic? You betcha.

**Brandon Shaw**

Well, I've made it through a winter in New England, and lived to tell. Since coming to UMass I've spent a lot of time in Greek classes, learning that philology is indeed "the art of reading slowly." I'm starting to have something of a concentration, thoroughly eschewing my former dilettante lifestyle. This summer was spent largely reading Greek poetry, especially Pindar. I'm planning to study Holderlin's Pindar translations and move into an investigation of German Philhellenism from the Romantics to the early 20th century. Um, and I dance a lot of tango.

**Craig Sinclair**

In a bid to force the current climate of razor one-upmanship beyond the 4 blade paradigm over the last year I've dedicated myself as never before to the task of growing and sustaining a beard. The results? Gillette has just announced a 5 blade razor in a move that surely can't be coincidental. Understandably beard maintenance has taken up much of my time and strength, which is lucky because I have otherwise spent the last 12 months running film series, being ill, planning my exams, fighting for a GEO contract, learning XML and making short films.

**Hongmei Sun**

Hongmei Sun finished her course work and is getting ready for her exams.

**Maura Talmadge**

Maura has a B.A. from Wheaton College, M.A. and is currently pursuing an M.A. in Translation Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She is actively involved in translation work in Spanish and French, as well as experienced in teaching English in France.

**BK Tuon**

Hi, everyone. I finished my exams last Fall and defended my prospectus this Spring. This summer, I worked on my dissertation research. I also bought a used mountain bike, and rode it around like Andrew Pham in "Catfish and Mandala," fish at the local river and lakes, swim in water snake-infested ponds, write short stories and poems, hike, check out local bands, and catch up with my reading, writing, and movies watching.

**Erica Walch**

Erica will finish her coursework in Fall 2005. She plans to complete her thesis and graduate in Spring 2006. Erica's thesis will be the translation of several short stories by Ada Negri, an Italian author from the late 19th/early 20th centuries who was very celebrated in her lifetime, but who fell out of favor after WW2. Post-war critics dismissed her writing for being "womanly" as it dealt with issues of motherhood, women's relationships, and domestic life.

**Peter Yacavone**

Peter is a failed romantic and founder of the "Melville Movement" to reject current and recent academic (and political) paradigms. Save the Whales. He has done bits of old languages that nobody remembers and the people who do are not often savory. He like Japanese film especially and several other films too.

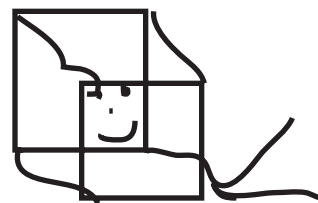
**Beverly Weber**

Beverly had a busy semester co-teaching the 300 person Introduction to Women's Studies course, together with teaching two of the discussion sections. She also finished her dissertation, entitled "Headscarves and Miniskirts: Islam, Germanness and the Politics of Cultural Difference" and will defend in September. She was an invited speaker to a symposium at the University of Illinois, Chicago on "The Freedom of Cultural Difference." This summer she will be preparing to teach a new course, "Women of Color" in Contemporary Western Europe, and assisting with the NEH Summer Institute on German and European Studies in the US.

New publications:

"Cloth on Her Head, Constitution in Hand: Germany's Headscarf Debates and the Cultural Politics of Difference." German Politics and Society, Fall 2004.

"When the Subaltern Speaks "German": Teleopoeisis, Immigrant Women and New Subjectivities." Women in German Yearbook, 2005.



*We have only included the bios of the graduate students who sent us their information. For details of other OGSCL members, please refer to our web site: [www.umass.edu/complit/ogscl/directory/#Graduate\\_Students](http://www.umass.edu/complit/ogscl/directory/#Graduate_Students)*

**Good luck on what you are up to!**

# words from the graduate program director

## **New Students:**

As Graduate Program Director, it is my great pleasure to welcome our new graduate students to Comparative Literature this Fall.

-Emir Benli earned his B.A. in English literature from Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey, joining our Ph.D. Program in Comparative Literature and serving as Research Assistant for Film Studies for the Fall semester. A member of the publishing board of the Independent Cinema Journal, he has worked in a private educational firm and he is interested in literary theory and cultural studies.

-Carolyn Shread joins the M.A. Program in Translation with a substantial background as a translator including several publications and conference presentations, as well as a newly minted Ph.D. in French from UMASS. She is interested in translation theory, gender, ethics, and ideology; she hopes to teach French and Francophone literature and culture, and to pursue her career as a translator.

-Funded by a Teaching Assistantship, Peter Yacavone comes to the Ph.D. Program in Comparative Literature, with a B.A. in Late Antiquity from Brown University and a M.A. in Celtic Studies from Oxford University. He wishes to study comparative cinema and literature, and is interested in medieval literary traditions--formal and ideological--in popular films and novels.

-Huda Abdul Kareem Yehya graduated from the University of Al-Mustansariya in Baghdad, Iraq, with a BA in Translation in 2003 and has worked for two years as an interpreter for the Baghdad Police Academy. She wishes to study media translation here at UMass. Her goal is to be the first woman to graduate with a Master's degree in the United States in the post-Saddam Hussein regime and return to Iraq to teach translation.

-Rachel Lichtenfeld joins our doctoral program with a B.A. from Rutgers in German Languages Literature and Sociology. With training in several languages, she studied in Berlin under the auspices of the Ethel Fusco Award. She is interested in integrating her linguistic background with comparative studies in culture, literary and theory

## **Grants and Fellowships, Current Students:**

As always, Comparative Literature students have competed successfully for prestigious fellowships. Congratulations to all!

-B.K. Tuon was awarded the University Fellowship for 2005-06 to support his dissertation, "Haunting America: The Tropes of Violence, Escape and Return in Southeast Asian American Literature."

-Enrique Garcia received an Opportunity Fellowship in support of his dissertation, "Children of the Socialist Paradise: the Redefinition of Social and Esthetic Values in Post-Cold-War Cuban Cinema"

-Ada Chinara MacKenzie earned a Diversity Dissertation Fellowship for her doctoral dissertation research on "Creolization, Possession, and Performances in Caribbean Cultural Discourses."

## **Jobs for Recent Ph.D.s and M.A.s:**

I'm delighted to share to good news of some who have recently completed degrees in Comparative Literature and Translation Studies.

-After consecutive post-doctoral fellowships at the University of Illinois and Wesleyan University, Anita Mannur (Ph.D. 2000) has been appointed to a tenure-track position in English at Denison University.

-Dale Hudson (Ph.D., 2003) has accepted a second year teaching in Film Studies at Ithaca College, and a concurrent position at Syracuse University.

-Jonathan Sadow (Ph.D. 2005) joined the faculty in the Department of English at Concordia University, in Montreal.

-Shawn Smollen-Morten (Ph.D. 2005) is teaching at Western New England College in Springfield.

## **Translation Studies M.A. Graduates:**

-Mario Legido had returned to Spain after completing his M.A. in Translation Studies.

-Christopher Michalski is currently studying in Heidelberg, Germany.

-Eleonora Barcellandi is continuing her work for the Translation Center and doing freelance work in Argentina before searching for a full time position as a translator.

-Michaela Schnetzer has returned to Switzerland to continue her professional work in translation.

-Xiaoqing Liu has joined the doctoral program in Comparative Literature at the University of South Carolina, Columbia.

-Peter Kahn is working towards a Ph.D. in Latin American Literature at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Meanwhile, looking forward to 2006, he hopes to see published his translations of Andrea Giunta's *The Vanguard, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine Art in the 1960s* (Duke University Press) and stories by Elvira Orpheé, Esther Cross, and Tununa Mercado in the anthology *Women and Power in Argentine Fiction (1950-2005): Stories, Interviews and Essays* (University of Texas Press).

-Finally, Roberto Gracia-Garcia writes: "Since completing the M.A., I have lived for a year in Athens (Greece), for another year in my home town in Spain, and now I'm back in Athens, possibly for good. In these 2 years, I've been in the business of translating and interpreting as a freelancer working from home. I've occasionally done translations and conference interpreting for different clients. However, the bulk of my time is still dedicated to the UMass Translation Center. I have the privilege and honor to remain in close collaboration with the Center, both as translator/proofreader and instructor of the Medical Interpreting course that is offered online. Despite the distance, it's like I never left Amherst!"