

NEWSLETTER

April 2009

Faculty Notes

Our Adjunct Instructor Bindeshwari Aggarwal presented a paper entitled “Improving Proficiency through Innovation in Teaching Hindi” at the Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi LEARN (Language Education and Resource Network) Conference, Monterrey, California, December 4-5, 2008.

Distinguished Lecturer Carmen Boullosa published the novel *El complot de los románticos* (Editorial Siruela, Madrid, 2009), awarded with the Prize Café Gijón, and poems in the collections *Los poetas del Hay 2009* (edited by the literary supplement *Arcardia*, Bogotá, Colombia, 2009), and *Poésie mexicaine* (French translations, Ed. Poésie Points-Écrits des Forges/ Le Castor Astral, France, 2009). She attended the Hay Festival in Cartagena, Colombia, and the Sal6n du Livre, in Paris, and was a member of the jury for the Premio Casa de las Am6ricas, in Cuba.

Professor Silvia Burunat has just published her latest book, a 234-page work inspired by the death of her husband, Dr. Julio Burunat on April 21 of 2005. It is entitled *Autobiografía p6stuma*, and is part of the Narrativa collection of Editorial Betania in Madrid, Spain. She has taken over her husband’s voice, who narrates his autobiography, emphasizing the fifteen years he spent in the Society of Jesus, before they met in the spring of 1969, and covering geographic locations such as Cuba, Spain, Venezuela, Miami and New York in the United States, and Canada. The last part of the book deals with death and

its aftermath as seen in several world cultures, including the Toltecs and Olmecs in Mexico and the Celts in Europe, besides the mainstream religions.

Professor Laura Callahan wrote a double book review for the *Modern Language Journal*, on the Spanish heritage speaker textbooks *La lengua que heredamos: Curso de espa6ol para biling6es* (6th ed., Sarah Marqu6s, 2009, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley) and *¡SÍ se puede! Un curso transicional para hispanohablantes* (María Carreira and Michelle Geoffrion-Vinci, 2008, Boston: Houghton Mifflin). She presented a paper entitled “Speaking Spanish over the telephone: Using a second language in service encounters with native speakers” at the 22nd Conference on Spanish in the United States, Coral Gables-Miami, Florida, February 21, 2009. She gave a departmental lecture entitled “Speaking with (dis)respect: A pilot study of reactions to Mock Spanish” on February 26, 2009. Professor Callahan delivered one of the keynote lectures at the Fourteenth Annual Graduate Students’ Conference in the Ph.D. Program in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, CUNY Graduate Center, March 21, 2009, with a presentation of research from her book *Spanish and English in U.S. Service Encounters* (Palgrave Macmillan, February 2009). She will give a paper entitled “Spanish/English codeswitching in service encounters: Accommodation to the customer’s language choice and perceived linguistic affiliation” at the RISLUS Research Forum, CUNY

Graduate Center, on May 22, 2009. She will present “The language learner as legitimate L2 user: Speaking Spanish in U.S. service Encounters” at the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Annual Meeting, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 9-12, 2009.

Distinguished Professor Raquel Chang-Rodríguez has published the following book chapters: “Spanish Women in First New Chronicle and Good Government: the Intersections of Culture and Gender.” Ed. Mabel Moraña and Carlos Jáuregui. *Revisiting the Colonial Question in Latin America*. Madrid/Frankfurt: Iberoamericana /Vervuert, 2008. 59-78; “*La Florida del Inca: proyección americana y transatlántica.*” In *Palabras e ideas. Ida y vuelta*. Ed. Pier Luigi Crovetto and Laura Sanfelici. CD ROM. Roma: Riuniti, 2008; and “La Florida y el suroeste: letras de la frontera norte.” Ed. Humberto López Morales. *Enciclopedia del español en los Estados Unidos*. Madrid: Santillana, 2008. 56-74. She was invited to participate in the 16th international symposium on the history of Lima, held at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 20-21 January, 2009, with a paper on “*La Florida del Inca, Garcilaso y la frontera norte del imperio español,*” and to deliver the keynote speech on “El Inca Garcilaso: pertinencias personales y peninsulares,” at the 14th Graduate Student Conference, 20-21 March, Ph.D. Program in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, Graduate Center, CUNY. In recognition of her contributions to the study of Peruvian literature and culture, the Academia Peruana de la Lengua, an affiliate of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language in Madrid, just elected Professor Chang-Rodríguez Académica Correspondiente.

Professor Ya-chen Chen signed publication contracts for two new books: *Women in Taiwan: Social and Cultural Perspectives* (University of Indianapolis Press); *Women and Gender in Chinese Martial Arts Films of the New Millennium* (Lexington/Roman & Littlefield). The first book will come out in either summer or fall 2009. She has three new journal articles. They are “Mother Earth Tuya’s Marriage” in *Journal of Asian Cinema*; “The Hakka Female ‘Orphan of Asia’ in Li Qiao’s *Winty Night*” in *American Journal of Chinese Studies*; and “Wu Zetian Behind Empress Wan: Chinese Traditions in *The Banquet*” in *Borrowers and Lenders: Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*. In addition, she will present an academic conference paper, “Strategic Counter-Construction of Penis Envy and Phallocentrism: Qing Nü and Wan’er in *The Banquet* and Ophelia in *Hamlet*,” in the 2009 Annual Convention of the AAS (Association for Asian Studies) in March 2009. Finally, Professor Chen was recently interviewed by a student editor from one of our school newspapers, *The Campus*. The article (*A Meaningful Purpose: A Teacher Profile*) was published on February 23.

On February 21 **Professor Dulce García** read a paper titled “Los espacios de la Monja de Carrión” in the 4th Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Spanish and Latin American Literatures, Linguistics, and Cultures at the University of Florida. Our graduate student **Paola Evangelista** also read a paper in this conference titled “La palabra como espacio descriptivo en *Señas de identidad.*” We feel very proud of her! Professor Dulce García and Austrian professor, Dr. Hilda Fanta, gave a talk/workshop in the International Congress for Professional Development of Teachers of English. The conference “Dynamic Matrix’:

Principles of Emotionally & Cognitively Intelligent Teaching/Thinking,” took place on February 26th at the University of Palermo, Buenos Aires. Prof. Dulce García was invited to give a workshop on March 6 titled “Games and Play in the Language Classroom” in the World Languages Symposium 2009, Chicago, IL. *Conexiones*, the intermediate Spanish textbook of which Prof. García is coauthor, just released its 4th edition. Several CCNY Spanish Majors participated in the video component of the *Conexiones* Program: **Yasmín Garves** (2009), **Paola Evangelista** (MA in Spanish student), **Kristine Núñez** (2008), **Rossibely Vargas**, and **Cindy Vera**, who is currently finishing her BA in Spanish.

On May 16, 2008 a conference on *Voces de los Andes* took place at King Juan Carlos Center at New York University, sponsored by NYU Steinhardt SBETAC (Spanish Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center), NYU CLACS (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies), ILAS (Institute of Latin American Studies) and SUNY. **Eduardo Félix Medrano, CCNY M.A. graduate and present Adjunct Lecturer**, was invited to read his Andean poems from his manuscript *Alusiones*. The Keynote speaker was Karl Swinehart and the salutorian was Pedro A. Noguera, Ph.D. The same year in the NYU SBETAC newsletter Eduardo Medrano was featured as a pedagogue who uses the latest strategies to teach languages. Mrs. Aida Delgado, consultant for NYU SBETAC, wrote the article “Eye on the Classroom: An Interview with Eduardo Medrano” in which they discuss language arts strategies to help students extract meaning from texts. Mrs. Delgado wrote: “Eduardo F. Medrano, a native of Bolivia . . . utilizes a number of strategies to help Spanish-speaking students who lack reading and writing skills in their native language.” Mr. Medrano has taught Spanish native language arts and Spanish as a

foreign language to Newtown High School students in Queens since 1992. Recently, he accepted the position of Assistant Principal at the high school.

Our graduate student and adjunct instructor of Spanish Javier Muñoz has been invited to speak about “Imagen y estética del nuevo cine coreano.” The event will take place on the second week of July in Cuenca (Ecuador) in the Casa de la Cultura Núcleo del Azuay building. It will be sponsored by the Casa de la Cultura and the local municipality. Javier Muñoz will show and discuss works from South Korean directors such as Hong Sang-soo, Lee Chang-dong, Kim Ki-duk, Park Chan-wook, and Bong Joon-ho. Panel discussions will be held every evening. Javier extends special thanks to Dr. Jorge Dávila, president of the Casa de la Cultura Núcleo del Azuar, for his support.

Professor Devid Paolini was invited to speak about “New Directions in Medieval Scholarship” at a roundtable held at the Graduate Center and organized by the CUNY Medieval Studies Area Group on February 20, 2009. He published two articles: “Un manuscrito desconocido del *Tratado de cómo al hombre es necesario amar* (Ms. 18.665/30 de la BNE),” *eHumanista*, 11 (2008), 65-80; and “Fernando de Pulgar, Glosa a las *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo (Addenda et corrigenda)*,” *Revista de literatura medieval XX* (2008), 247-252. He has three forthcoming articles and one forthcoming review. The three articles are entitled: “Acerca de unos manuscritos ‘desconocidos’ de la Biblioteca Nacional de España,” *Revista de literatura medieval*, XXI (2009); “La tradición manuscrita e impresa de las *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*,” in the *Actas de Medievalia*, Congreso Internacional, XI Jornadas Medievales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2006; and “*Los Milagros*

de Nuestra Señora y el arte de la memoria,” Incipit, XXVIII (2008). His review, “*La Celestina* de Fernando de Rojas. Dirección de Beatriz Córdoba. Teatro Círculo (Nueva York). Octubre-Noviembre de 2008,” will be published in the next number of *Celestinesca*. At the moment he is revising the manuscript of his Ph.D. dissertation (*Las Coplas de Mingo Revulgo. Estudio preliminar, edición crítica y notas*) that will probably be published by the University of Salamanca. He is also the coordinator of a two volume homage to professor Joseph T. Snow (one of the best-known scholars of the *Celestina* and founder and former editor of *Celestinesca*, a journal dedicated to *Celestina* studies) that will be published in 2010 by the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies. Finally, he went with one of his classes to see Calderón de la Barca’s play *La vida es sueño* that was performed at Repertorio Español Theatre on March 27.

Professor Carlos Riobó will be conducting research in Havana, Cuba over spring break in April, thanks to a PSC-CUNY research grant. He will be on the panel “Inventions of Identity, Symbolic Economy, and Cultural Consumption” at the Latin American Studies Association’s (LASA) 2009 congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he will give his talk in June. He has proposed a special session on captivity narratives for the 2009 MLA convention in December, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To round things out, his spouse Danny Alter and he are expecting a baby boy in August.

Professor Eve Sourian is the Chair of a committee at the SPFFA (Société des Professeurs Français et Francophones d’Amérique) that gives scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. This year they gave \$ 53,000 in scholarships.

Professor Elizabeth Starčević invited the well-known Spanish writer Lidia Falcón to speak to her class on contemporary Spanish theater. Ms. Falcón, who has published extensively in all genres on women's issues, gave a talk entitled: “Una escritora feminista habla de su teatro.” She also organized a trip to the Repertorio Español theater so that her class could see F. García Lorca’s play *La casa de Bernarda Alba*. One of Professor Starcevic’s weavings is currently in the City Women Make Art exhibition for Women's History Month in the Cohen Library Archives Gallery at CCNY.

Professor Araceli Tinajero’s book, *Cultura y letras cubanas en el siglo XXI*, an edited volume on Cuban art, film, literature and cultural institutions, is in production at *Iberoamericana* (Madrid) and is scheduled to appear in October, 2009. In February, Araceli was invited by the Universidad de Alcalá and the Universidad de Sevilla to teach a seminar on “The Art of Reading.” As a cofounder of the Mexico Study Group at the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, she organized discussion panels on ethnography, literature, and history. Tinajero was part of the literature panel and presented the paper “La frontera en la literatura mexicana contemporánea” (March 13, 2009). Reviews of her *El lector de tabaquería* have been published in the French magazines *L’Amateur de Cigare* and *Books*, as well as in the Spanish journal *Cultura Escrita y Sociedad* (2009).

Professor Vanessa K. Valdés was invited to and attended the conference “Una mirada al futuro: Visualizing the Future of Spanish Education,” in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Her reviews of Dara Goldman’s *Out of Bounds: Islands and the Demarcation of Identity in the Hispanic Caribbean* (2008) and Alexandra

Isfahani-Hammond's anthology of essays, *The Masters and the Slaves: Plantation Relations and Mestizaje in American Imaginaries* (2005), will be published shortly in *Callaloo*. Her review of Lázaro Lima's *The Latino Body: Crisis Identities in American Literary and Cultural Memory* (2007) will appear in the Spring 2009 issue of *The MELUS Journal*. On March 26 she spoke at the 69th Annual Convention and 72nd Anniversary of the College Language Association, presenting her paper, "Diasporic Revelation in the Works of Audre Lorde and Ntozake Shange." She has also been invited to speak at the CUNY Academy for the Humanities and Sciences Junior Faculty Colloquium Series on April 2 in the Graduate Center, where she will present her paper "Finding Solace in Exile: *Dreaming in Cuban*." In her capacity as Language Coordinator of the Spanish Language Program, she would like to thank all of her colleagues, both full-time and part-time faculty, for all of their work this academic year. Finally, she is also proud to announce that the student group for which she serves as faculty advisor, Women Lead Now!, will be putting on a student production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* at the end of April.

Adjunct Instructor Marcos Wasem has published his essay *Barroso y sublime: poética para Néstor Perlongher in Buenos Aires* (Godot) with an introduction by Professor Roberto Echavarren. The book is the product of the research he conducted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem between 2002 and 2005. He also read his paper "Transformaciones del barroco: el caso Néstor Perlongher" at the XXXVII International Conference of the Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana, Puebla, in June 2008.

Students Notes

Kianny Antigua, alumna of The City College (Spanish M.A. in 2009), will publish a poem ("Miss Athena") in the next number of *El Cid*, the literary magazine of Sigma Delta Pi, the National Hispanic Honor Society. <http://www.citadel.edu/mlng/elcid/>

Spanish Major, Adam Bierman, was hired to teach Spanish in the Scholars' Academy (27Q323) which is one of the top ranked Middle Schools in New York State.

Professor Araceli Tinajero would like to congratulate her students **Compton Bradshaw** and **Aleksin H. Ortega** for having finished their Master's theses.

Spanish Major, **María Gómez** (class of 2008) is working as a first grade teacher in PS192!

Our Spanish Major, Adela González, was awarded the prestigious City College Fellowship for excellent students who wish to become college professors.

Kimberly Paige Young, a student of both Latin and French, has been offered the prestigious four-year Javits Fellowship to study Comparative Literature in the doctoral program at the CUNY Graduate Center.

The essay "Imágenes contra el olvido: el Perú colonial en las ilustraciones de fray Diego de Ocaña" written by **Beatriz Carolina Peña, alumna of The City College (Spanish M.A. in 1998)**, made finalist in the I Bienal de Ensayo of the prestigious Premio Cope Internacional 2008, sponsored by COPE (Petróleos de Perú). It will be recognized with a diploma on April 23, 2009. This same essay was awarded a Mention in the 49th edition of

the Premio Literario Casa de las Américas 2008 in the category of Ensayo de tema histórico-social. “Imágenes contra el olvido: el Perú colonial en las ilustraciones de fray Diego de Ocaña” is a revised, shortened version of her dissertation, directed by Distinguished **Professor Raquel Chang-Rodríguez** at the Graduate School and University Center (CUNY) and defended in May of 2007.

From the French Exchange Program

(publication suggested by **Adjunct Lecturer Diana Silverman**)

My Cultural Immersion (Fall 2008)

I thought I was prepared for my semester abroad in Paris [Fall 2008]. I have been studying French ever since I can remember and therefore had a fair amount of confidence in my abilities. I had gotten to know French language, history, and literature through books, and even did the requisite research on places to go and see once I got there. However, learning a language through books within the safe confines of a university setting is far different from being totally immersed in it. The minute my plane landed at Charles de Gaulle airport it hit me hard: there would be no faking it, no getting by with a minimal amount of conversation. I would be expected to perform in a way that I had never done before. Paris would be my own personal “sink or swim” survival boot camp. I tried to suppress the quiet panic that began to build up inside of me. I would be forced like it or not, to eat, drink, sleep, and breathe not only the language, but the culture. I was to take it all in and absorb it like a sponge. There is a distinct difference between staying in Paris for a semester, somewhat

removed from the whole experience, and really living in it. You are both physically and emotionally invested.

Paris is a lot like New York in that people from all over the world flock there. You can walk the streets, or take the metro at any given time and hear dozens of different languages being spoken. It was great to be able to take classes with students from other countries within the European Union as well as the Middle East, Africa and Asia. They were delighted to hear that I was from the United States as it would provide them with the opportunity to practice their English conversational skills with me. To tell the truth, I found that at times I was speaking a lot more English than I would like. After all, I did not come all the way to Paris to brush up on my English! My everyday interactions with shopkeepers, waiters, clerks and fellow passengers on the metro provided me with the conversational practice that I needed. In New York wouldn't be caught without my Ipod, but curiously enough, I didn't need one in Paris. It was far more interesting to tune into what was being said. Little by little, I came to a real understanding of what my stay in Paris was really about: living like a local in order to become one. That feeling is absolutely priceless. I knew I'd made the transition when people would come up to me to ask me for information or directions, and I was able to respond without hesitation. That to me was my flannel shirt moment: I was truly comfortable. I was approached because I exuded that certain something that is unique only to Parisians. I could not remain detached when you are packed into a metro car like a sardine in the middle of rush hour, nor could I remain unaffected when surrounded by so much awe inspiring beauty and history everywhere. Living in Paris has changed me in a way that is truly personal. Paris has become for me that old flannel shirt, only infinitely more stylish, which I would layer

on beneath my coat to guard against the damp and dreary days of winter. From here on it will forever be a huge part of me. Clichéd or not, I am and always will be one of its biggest fans.

Submitted by **Joan Wedderburn – Fren 313**

A composition by an ESL student

(publication suggested by
Professor Carole Berger)

Jesus of the Hill Avenue, is a two – century old street in Havana, that stands out because of its endless row of columns sidelining it. From the south, where it begins, to the north, where it ends, that single pattern repeats again and again. Cuban writer Eliseo Diego found inspiration in its unique quality to write his famous poem, “By Jesus of the Hill Avenue,” where he refers to his childhood as surrounded by columns. Columns stand pompously, with their Corinthian capitals, looking down their noses at the stream of cars from the 50s that populate the pavement. They have dominated the scene for centuries, they might think, and no one can defeat them in their battle against time. For the rest of us though, columns and cars coexist in harmony as if it were a forest opening way to a river.

One can be surprised by the wonders that can be seen while walking around Jesus of the Hill Avenue. Simple people move energetically up and down the street with tons of different concerns, ideas and creativity triggered by necessity, creating a generation of articles made out of junk.

Television antennas made out of aluminum trays, toilets and washing machine drums used as flower pots, rudimentary

means of transportation made out of wood, and much more can be found walking up the hill. One of the icons not only of Jesus of the Hill but of Havana City as a whole is El Camello, meaning the camel. As its name suggests El Camello is a massive camel-shaped bus hauled by a dinosauric truck, inside which a staggering 300 people fit standing as close to each other as one can possibly imagine. It is worth mentioning that this was an innovative solution of the president, demonstrating that in Cuba simple people are not the only ones who turn junk into usable things.

If the neighborhood around Jesus of the Hill is recognized as the one with the highest demographic density in the country, then street alone should be considered the busiest. Black and mulattos, the young and the aged, the criminal and the honest, converge in the same place every morning, every afternoon and every night. The neighbors go outside to party in the public portals guarded by columns, where cheer, music and the clacking sound of dominoes chips play in unison with the roar of car engines and the buzz of pedestrians rushing home, producing the sensation that one is in three different places at once.

So many years have passed by, and the old avenue is still standing, in spite of the scarcities it has faced. There is something I haven’t told yet; prolonged depression has been slowly eroding it away. Many of the houses facing the street have given up hope and are starting to crumble. What once was an infinite row of columns now resembles a damaged smile with missing teeth. Virtually no house bears a trace of paint on their facades, having to hide their faces like poverty stricken children wearing tatters in a palace. The remains of succumbed buildings flounder being carried by the wind in any direction, just like the ashes of a martyr in his or her homeland. Jesus of the Hill, it is

A Composition by an ESL student, cont.

depressing to see you vanish and perhaps never see you again! Deep inside my heart I believe you will be resurrected and recover your original appearance so that Cuban writers can sit again at the foot of columns and reflect on your beauty.

Submitted by **Alejandro Morejon - ESL 30 AB**

Workshop in French Theatre at Lumières

LUMIÈRES,

The Center for French Culture housed in the Foreign Languages and Literature Department of the Humanities and Arts division offers weekly extra curriculum workshops.

In Spring 2009 the concentration is on French Theatre and it will continue in Fall 2009.

Here is what some students had to say about the extra curriculum program:

1) My experience at Lumières was an exceptional one. It was a place where I learned lifelong skills in an academic environment that felt more like fun than work. (Ariel Kouvaras)

2) ...The second semester was devoted to writing and making a cinescript. It was the BEST! As an older student, who makes a living in theatre, it made me happy to see the younger students get into creating characters, writing their lines, coming up with costume and scenic ideas, learning colloquialisms and delving into French culture and history. (Gretchen Metzloff)

3) ...During the last two semesters, we engaged in readings on Fridays which later

developed into a film project. As exciting as filmmaking was, the best experience was being able to advance in specific French. At the very same time, we were building a solid foundation in French history and theatre. My experience with Lumières not only helped me to be a better person socially but showered the gift of friendship on me. (Nana Banafo)

For more information see:

www.ccny.cuny.edu/lumieres
lumieres@ccny.cuny.edu
NAC 6/359
7667

Asian Studies Program News

The Asian Language Club, Asian Culture Club and Asian Studies Program co-hosted the Lantern Festival Celebration Party from 12 noon to 2 pm on February 5, 2009. Authentic Asian foods in this party included rice balls, Chinese-style red bean rice cake, Taiwanese-style homemade fried rice, Japanese-style cream puffs, Malaysian-style sweet cake, candies, cookies, etc.

**For more information about the:
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, please call 212-650-6731, or stop by the Department,
NAC 5/223.**

<http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/prospective/humanities/foreignlang/>