

## Recent activities in Canadian studies in Hungary

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## **Yugoslav Association for Canadian Studies (YACS)**

The YACS was formed on 8th February 2001 in Belgrade after a few months of intensive preparations. The representatives of all Yugoslav universities met at the Canadian Embassy where they were hosted by Miss Kelly Anderson, Second Secretary and Mrs. Olgica Marinkovic, Academic and Cultural Relations Officer. Ms. Angela Bogdan, Ambassador of Canada, who had been previously acquainted with the whole idea, gave her enthusiastic support of the event.

Canada-related activities in the region started in 1987 with the founding of the Literary and Cultural Association Yugoslavia - Canada whose members met biennially at the event known as the Canadian Weekend and regularly published the Proceedings. The new Association will also work on bringing together teachers, artists and writers but on a more academic level with the primary goal of promoting and developing Canadian Studies in that part of the world. The targeted population are students and their professors who share an interest in various fields of Canadian Studies.

The organisational board consisting of eight academics from Serbia and Montenegro chose professor Vesna Lopicic as president for the following two years. Professor Zoran Milenkovic, University Rector, wholeheartedly supported the cause by providing the YACS with office space in Nis, southern Serbia, which will be the centre of regional Canadian Studies activities. Contact: Vesna Lopičić. E-mail: [lovevuk@bankerinter.net](mailto:lovevuk@bankerinter.net).

### **Recent activities in Canadian Studies in Hungary**

Most major universities and colleges in the capital, as well as in provincial towns offer courses related to Canada, many of them also house a Canadian Studies Centre. Courses on various aspects of Canadian culture – with a very strong emphasis on literature – have been part of the curriculum in Hungarian higher education for over 20 years. Both teaching and research focus on literature (English-Canadian, French-Canadian/Québécois and ethnic) but recently Canadian history, law, philosophy and economics have also received attention. Canadian studies courses are offered on college level as well as on university and Ph.D. level. The first successful Ph.D. dissertation was defended in 2000 (Edina Szalay), while the first so-called „habilitation” took place in 2001 (Katalin Kürtösi) – both were examining problematics of Canadian literature in the wider North American context and both events were carried out at the University of Debrecen. In May 2001, the college of Eger (Judit Kádár) invited thesis writing students for the Young Canadianists' Forum to exchange ideas and share their research findings with one another and with their professors. The traditional annual festival of student acting companies in English – organised by Péter Szaffkó in Debrecen – had three English-Canadian plays on the programme.

Most Hungarian Canadianists actively participate in national and regional conferences with their papers and charring sessions: Anna Jakabfi, Judit Molnár and Edina Szalay read papers in Torun, Éva Martonyi, Miléna Horváth and Zsuzsa Simonffy went to the conference on francophone studies in Strassbourg, papers by Judit Molnár, Péter Szaffkó, Edina Szalay, Dóra Pődör, Krisztina Kádár and Katalin Kürtösi created two

sessions at the annual conference of English and American Studies held in Eger in January 2001.

In the past two years Hungarian Canadianists have also been active as translators of Canadian writing both in English and in French: Éva Martonyi selected Québec short fiction and poetry for a special issue in *Magyar Napló* (June, 1999), Péter Szaffkó's translation of *Rebel Angels* by Robertson Davies was published in 2000, the same year as Roch Carrier's *La guerre, Yes, Sir!*, translated by Katalin Kürtösi. A collection of English-Canadian plays in Hungarian – translated by Péter Szaffkó, Szabolcs Szilágyi and Katalin Kürtösi – is forthcoming. Contact: Katalin Kürtösi. E-mail: [kurtosi@hung.u-szeged.hu](mailto:kurtosi@hung.u-szeged.hu).

### **Graduate Seminar in Canadian Studies Brno, 16 – 18 October 2000**

From 16-18 October 2000 the Canadian Studies Centre at Masaryk University in Brno hosted the 9th European Seminar for Graduate Students in Canadian Studies. This year the event, an annual initiative of the European Network for Canadian Studies, brought to Brno nineteen participants from twelve countries ranging from Ireland to Romania and Spain to Finland; about one-third of the students were from Central Europe. The papers they delivered at the working sessions, which spread over two and a half days, covered Canada-related topics touching on such diverse fields as literature, the media and language, film, federalism, anthropology, health measures, ethnicity and identity. Standards were very high, and a seminar *Proceedings* is being prepared.

In addition to the students, a number of academics from Europe and North America were also present, among them the members of the Central European Steering Committee for Canadian Studies, as well as several teachers from Masaryk University who are involved in the Canadian Studies programme at Brno. Besides the working sessions, the seminar included two open sessions. At the first of these, Prof. Alan Cairns of the University of Waterloo delivered a wide-ranging and immensely stimulating keynote address on "Aboriginal peoples in Canada – current issues and future prospects". The next day Cornelius Remie, from the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands, gave a fascinating lecture on the Inuit and Nunavut. Both attracted much attention and drew large audiences of students and members of the general public.

The fact that the seminar was being held in the Central European region for the first time reflected the growth of Canadian studies in the region, and served as a confirmation of the interest taken by Canadianists throughout Europe in developments here.

### **Polish Association of Canadianists**

From 20-22 April 2001 the Polish Association for Canadian Studies held its 2nd Congress and 1st International Canadian Studies Conference in the ancient city of Torun. The theme of the conference, which attracted impressive Polish and international participation, was "Exploring Canadian Identities". At the Association's triennial general meeting, held as part of the 2nd Congress, a new executive was