

CALL FOR PAPERS  
EAST-WEST CULTURAL PASSAGE CONFERENCE:

Reading Matters:  
Texts – Cultures – The World

19-21 May 2016

The Department of Anglo-American and German Studies at Lucian Blaga  
University of Sibiu,

The Academic Anglophone Society of Romania and

The Centre for Anglo-American and German Research

are pleased to invite you to the Reading Matters international  
conference, to be held in Sibiu.

Confirmed Keynote Lectures:

Sebastian Groes (University of Roehampton, London): "Materiality,  
Embodied Cognition and the Ethics of Reading in the Digital Age"

Michael Hattaway (New York University of London): "Reading Early  
Modern Theatrical Performance at Horn Fair: Evidence from Sibiu"

Mihaela Irimia (University of Bucharest): "'... these foolish, yet  
dangerous Books': Fashionable Sociability and the Circulating  
Library in Classic Modernity"

Madalina Nicolaescu (University of Bucharest): "Shakespeare  
Performances in Sibiu"

In the past half-century or so, the definition of reading has gone through  
tremendous shifts as first the world itself was recognised as a text open to

diverse, ideology-inflected, chronotopically positioned readings, and then a cognitive revolution seemed afoot as new technologies on the one hand replaced paper books with audio and virtual texts, and on the other made it so easy to self-publish that it sometimes seems as though there are currently more writers than readers. Reading, thus, can no longer be assumed to mean merely deciphering alphabetic signs on the page, although alphabetic signs are, now more than ever, ubiquitous. As the definition of reading can no longer be taken for granted, neither can its function. Widening access to education and the massification of culture raise questions about the kind of knowledge to which reading facilitates access and about the ways in which that knowledge is imbricated with empowerment and responsibility. A participative, critical, rather than instrumental, kind of literacy is assumed by such interrogations. In a 2003 article titled "On Reading," Thomas Docherty proposed that reading is not only "a condition of the very possibility of subjectivity" but also a "determinant of our possibility of becoming citizens" (7). When such high stakes are attached to so simple an activity, which we learn early and do daily, it becomes clear why scholars, and language and literature specialists in particular, feel compelled to revisit the definitions, functions and practices of reading at regular intervals. Rather than bemoan the demise of reading in the age of virtual books and instant messaging, our conference therefore proposes to celebrate its diversification and encourage enquiries into the ethics and aesthetics of reading, as much as into cognitive and pedagogic aspects.

We invite participants to explore these issues from theoretical and/or text-based, interdisciplinary perspectives in individual presentations, panels, and/or workshops.

Topics might include (but are by no means limited to):

- cultures of literacy / cultures of reading
- reading prose/ poetry/ drama/ children's literature/ film etc.
- reading (in) translation
- reading theories
- cognitive approaches to reading
- teaching reading: the making of a reader / the making of a readership
- spaces of reading

- literacy and migration
- reading and citizenship
- literacy as resistance
- reading identity
- reading in the 'post-reading' age
- literacy and technology
- reading across disciplines
- reading Shakespeare in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- reading the international Henry James
- reading practices: literary tourism vs. world literature, etc.

Presentations should be 20 minutes long, allowing for 10 minutes of discussion.

Paper/ panel/ workshop proposals should include an abstract (no more than 200 words), a list of 5-7 keywords, and a short biographical note in word format, along with titles of papers/ panels, name and institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone, and e-mail address of the participant(s).

Please send proposals to:

Anca-Luminita Iancu [ancaian@yahoo.com](mailto:ancaian@yahoo.com)

Anca-Diana Tomus <[anca.tomus@gmail.com](mailto:anca.tomus@gmail.com)>

Deadline for submission of proposals: 1 April 2016

A selection of the papers presented will be published in a special issue of East/West Cultural Passage (<http://magazines.ulbsibiu.ro/ewcp/index.htm>).

Conference fee: 175 Lei for AASR members / 220 Lei for non-members (40 Euros for AASR members/ 50 Euros for non-members), to be paid upon arrival. The fee covers coffee-breaks, lunches and conference portfolios.

Conference venue:

Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu  
Faculty of Letters and Arts  
Department of Anglo-American and German Studies  
5-7 Victoriei Bvd.  
Sibiu, 550024, Romania

Conference Organisers: Ana-Karina Schneider, Alexandra Mitrea, Anca-Luminita Iancu, Anca-Diana Tomus, Teodora Creanga and Ovidiu Matiu.

We look forward to welcoming you to Sibiu!

For further details and updates, please visit us at  
<http://conferences.ulbsibiu.ro/eastwest/index.htm>

and

on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Academic-Anglophone-Society-of-Romania/221613231184438>