

SUSA News



The **SIETAR**USA Newsletter

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research

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President's Letter

In Memoriam ILYA ADLER

I am writing this on a plane on my way to Seattle, where KMA team (Kochman Mavrelis Associates) is doing another program this week. Our first weeklong program without Ilya...

I have known Ilya Adler for the last 10 years. Others on the team knew him for what feels like forever. Life-long friendships are rare even when you are surrounded by people you have known your entire life. Ilya was one of those people made out of real friend material.

The call came from Tom Kochman on Wednesday afternoon, August 22nd as I was driving (as always) to the airport. His voice was shaking. The news he had to share was unexpected, horrible and absurd – Ilya Adler died of a heart attack in Mexico City. I remember thinking as I was sorting through the unthinkable – thank God, he was home and not on the road somewhere.

Who was Ilya Adler?

As family and friends gathered in Mexico City to celebrate Ilya's life, sing songs, tell stories, cry and laugh Jean Mavrelis shared:

"The multicultural community has lost a scholar whose passion, intellect, wit and humor will be sorely missed.

Santayana said, "Intelligence is the quickness of seeing things as they are." Ilya's quickness was legendary. Those of us who knew and loved Ilya have lost a brother and friend.



"The last time our KMA team worked together a few weeks ago, we were training a new presenter for the Asian Pacific program. Our new colleague Barry Mar was understandably a little nervous. As we all approached the car that we would all pile into on our way to the session Tom (Kochman) suddenly popped the trunk so we could deposit our computers etc. As the

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enormous trunk flew open, Ilya said to Barry, “oh yeah, the new guy always rides in back.” Once we got into the car, someone asked Ilya, who also worked for the U.N., “Ilya, how many people work at the U.N.?” Ilya replied, straight faced, ‘About 20%.’”

In the words of his official resume – Dr. Adler was Principal and Vice President of Latin American Operations, Kochman Mavrelis Associates, Inc. Professor and Academic Director at Alliant International University, Mexico. He has also taught at the Universidad Nacional de Mexico (UNAM), the Tecnológico de Monterrey, and the University of Illinois at Chicago. He was also the first author of the forthcoming book *Hispanic-Latino/Anglo Patterns of Difference* and a regular columnist of the electronic magazine *Mexconnect*, where he wrote on cross-cultural business issues.

That’s resume. Now – here is life. Son of Jewish immigrants from Russia who met and got married in Latin America, Ilya grew up in Venezuela. He came to the US as a student in his 20s and spent most of his adult life between the US and Mexico. He lived his life surrounded by people he loved. When I asked his daughter Lisa (28) about the names of relatives Ilya leaves behind she said: “Do you really want names? There will be far too many to list. Let’s just say that he was a loving husband, father, uncle, and brother. And make sure to tell people about David”. David Adler, Ilya’s son, is only 9 years old now. How will he ever make sense of what happened?

Ilya was well known and well liked by SIETARIANS. When we first started having fireside chats at our conferences (Austin, 2003) Ilya was our guest. If you were in the room that night I am sure you remember his warmest smile, unassuming way of engaging in a conversation and his wonderful sense of humor. We saw Ilya again at our SIETAR conference in Bloomington, IN when he and his friend and KMA colleague Adrian Chan presented a mini-plenary *Conflicts and Mutual Perceptions Among Minority Groups in the United States and Mexico*. Three years later those of us who attended that session are still talking about it. One of my last conversations with Ilya was about his wish to figure out a time in his very busy schedule to come back to SIETAR to share his latest passion – issues of immigration.

Come November we will gather in Kansas City to reconnect with friends and colleagues and learn from each other about Culture and Conflict. Ilya would’ve loved to be there with us. He will be terribly missed this November and for many more years to come.

Tatyana Fertelmeyster,
SIETAR-USA President

Executive Director’s Note

Recently I listened to an interview with Whitney Terrell who tried making it as a writer in New York but really found his voice when he returned to his home town, Kansas City. He talked about the Kansas City he left; a city that was being bled dry by the exodus to the suburbs. His novel, *The Huntsman*, explored the politics of this mid-western city with its particular form of racism. His latest novel (2005), *The King of Kings County*, really gets into the flight to the suburbs, and the highway building that made it possible. It’s a different way of looking at what greed and racism can do to gut a great city and segregate, by class and race, its inhabitants. Reviews indicate that he is a writer whose prose is “pure, generous, and hilarious.”

The good news, and he talked about this in the interview, is the turning around of Kansas City to become the exciting destination that will host our conference in November. Terrell is delighted by the turnaround; by the multicultural makeup of Kansas City today and the refurbishing of the wonderful monuments and venues that makes it such a livable city. I’m going out to buy his book because I want to know more about the story of a city that turned itself around.

Intrigued by the interview, I went to NPR.org and began searching for a copy of the interview. What I found was numerous stories about Kansas City. The NPR program *Day to Day* is in Kansas City for three days; it went there to find out what it is like in the “middle.” One story was about the native artist Thomas Hart Benson, another about its history of very bad guys in organized crime, one about the city as an island in the midst of housing woes, and yet another about performers called *The Wild Women of Kansas* (definitely an attractive attraction). Now if this does not entice you to Kansas City, which, by the way, I loved when I visited, check out these and other insights on www.npr.org and click on *Day to Day*.

Join us in Kansas City. We have a lot to learn about this quintessential mid-western city and a lot that can be learned from each other.

Peggy Pusch, *Executive Director*



SUSA 2007 Annual Conference Report: Kansas City, MO

by **Patricia Coleman**, 2007 Conference Chair

Solve the riddle.

Clue # 1: "Lights, cameras, music, action."

Clue #2: "Parade of Flags, with Gold, Silver, and Bronze."

Clue #3: "Coaches, trainers, runners, walkers, joggers swimmers, dancers."

Answer: No, it is not a movie production in Hollywood, not the Olympic Games in China. Nor a sporting event. The correct answer is SEITAR USA's 8th Annual Conference in Kansas City, MO November 7-10, 2007.

This exciting event is bringing together caring communities and courageous conversations amongst people from around the world. We will have exciting activities, exhibits by premiere vendors and talented organizations in our industry, and a rich sharing of experiences among professionals from all parts of the intercultural community.

We look forward to welcoming you with open arms. Be sure to register now if you haven't yet done so by visiting our web site: www.SIETARUSA.org

Sincerely yours,
Patricia Coleman
SUSA 2007 Conference Chair

You can contact Patricia Coleman via email: AtoZworld@aol.com

Local Group News

Coming Soon: A new local group in the Sunshine State

Sunshine, smiles, multi-cultural and multi-lingual communities, hospitality, tourism, Latin flavor, international business and events. These are some of the features of our wonderful state: FLORIDA. Soon we'd like to add a new feature to the list: SIETAR South Florida.

Florida has all the needed ingredients for the making of this SIETAR chapter. Many discussions have taken place among a host of Sietarians who are very excited about the news. We invite all Sietarians (and Sietarians to be) living and/or working in Florida to come forward and start brainstorming ideas of what we should focus on in this new SIETAR local group.

If you have ideas or would like to join us, send an email to Florida-based Neal Goodman, President of Global Dynamics at ngoodman@global-dynamics.com or to Patricia Coleman, SIETAR USA Board member & 2007 conference chair at AtoZworld@aol.com. Even better--just join us at our local group event in Kansas City during the SIETAR-USA Annual Conference; just look for the FLORIDA table.



See you soon, Hasta pronto, A bientôt, Ate' logo

SIETAR Austin

We have two new officers:

- Anna Katrina Davey, President - akdavey@web.de; cell. 512.922.3530 and
- Megan Schiebe, Vice President - meganschiebe@gmail.com; cell. 512.789.9157.

We are currently revamping our website and look forward to sharing it with SIETAR members and friends soon. For our fall program we are holding a series of events around the topic "Immigration in Austin" and opened the season with an "Intercultural Cafe" on Saturday, September 29th.

SIETAR Metro New York City

SIETAR Metro New York is planning an assortment of programs this fall.

On October 15th, Sietar Metro NY and ASTDNY had a Book Discussion of Istanbul Memories and The City. We enjoyed Turkish Food and discussed Nobel Prize winner Erhan Pamuk's book with moderator Hollis Wagenstein. The event was held at The Turkish Kitchen on 3rd Avenue between 27th and 28th Streets in NYC.

Upcoming on October 24th @ 6:30pm we will have a program titled: Intercultural or Interpersonal? The Limits of Cross-Cultural Training. In today's interconnected world where ideas and identities are constantly in flux, how well does cross-cultural training translate into effective professional and personal relationships across cultures? Special guest speaker Robert Day explores the problematic relationship between values and behaviors as well as the notion of "national" culture in a globalized world; ultimately leading to the question: Is Cross-Cultural understanding really enough? Location of this event is Marble Collegiate Church, 29th Street at 5th Ave.

Please visit our website at www.sietarnewyork.org to register for upcoming events and for more information.



SIETAR Minnesota

2nd Annual Robin Bragge SIETAR Scholarship Award

We are pleased to announce the 2nd Annual Robin Bragge Scholarship through SIETAR-USA. Many of you may remember that, last year, Robin's fellow members of the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR) established a memorial scholarship in her honor. This scholarship will provide funds to help defray some of the costs to participate in the SIETAR-USA conference to be held in Kansas City, Missouri, from November 7 to November 10. Contributions to the scholarship funds are welcome any time. More information can be found at website:

www.micglobe.org

Fall Schedule for MN Local SIETAR Group

The schedule, topics and location for fall meetings of the MN SIETAR group have been set. We are looking forward to welcoming both new and old members back for an active season in a new location. Meetings will be held at the Minnesota International Center at 711 E River Parkway in Minneapolis. On September 25th, we held our Panel Discussion "September 11th: Then & Now: Impacts on International Education Exchanges and Perceptions of the US Around the World." We were joined by a panel of local and international professionals who shared their experience in international educational exchange, US border policy, terrorism prevention, and life post 9/11 in the Muslim world. Future meetings begin at 7:30 pm with light refreshments at 7:00pm and include:

- October 23, 2007* - Trainer Tools
Experiential learning with colleagues as we share some of our favorite training tools.
- November 27, 2007 - SIETAR-USA Conference Re-Cap & Movie Night
Members will share their experiences from the national conference as well as exploring movie options for intercultural training.
- December 17, 2007* - Service Project (site TBD)
Join the group as we take on a local service project in the spirit of sharing. We'll have lots of fun too!

Bon Voyage

MN SIETAR Advisory Board wishes Bon Voyage to two advisory board members. Basma Ibrahim DeVries and Jon DeVries departed the end of September to take up their roles as faculty and staff on the Scholar Ship and will be sailing around the world teaching and having their own intercultural experiences.

Announcements

UNESCO Survey

The Union Latine is currently carrying out a survey at the request of UNESCO. The survey is intended to assist in the compilation of two international directories on multilingualism, one of experts, the other of institutions, that will be published on the Internet.

Should you consider that the institution for which you work contributes or is specialized in multilingualism, please fill in the questionnaire for institutions. Likewise, should you consider that, by virtue of your academic or professional experience, you are a specialist in this field, please fill in the questionnaire for experts.

The page to access both questionnaires is
<http://www.unesco-ci.org/multilingualism/institutions/>.

For more information please contact:

Daniel Prado
Director, Direction de Terminologie et Industries de la
Langue
Union Latine



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Upcoming Event at the ICCCR

The International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution at the Teachers College of Columbia University is hosting a brown bag lunchtime lecture on November 1st titled: A Dynamical Systems Approach to Social Psychology. More information can be found at:

<http://www.tc.edu/icccr/Documents/Events/Brownbaginvitation.pdf>

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