



AMERICAN ROMANIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (ARA)
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September 20, 2017

Open Letter

We, the Board of Directors (BoD) of the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences (ARA) are very concerned about the financial fraud and security issues caused by “*ARA Revival*”, which include the loss of our ARA Corporation property, loss of ARA members’ identity, fraudulent usage of members personal information and mismanagement of ARA bank accounts at the bank, this not being an exhaustive list.

Based on the latest developments, we have the obligation to dissociate ourselves from “*ARA Revival*”, which performed activities that are not legal, do not comply with the ARA Bylaws, are not democratic, and do not abide by academic ethics and standards.

Since 1975, ARA has had honorary members amongst very well-known personalities like: the writers Eugen Ionesco and Virgil Gheorghiu, the philosopher Mircea Eliade or the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine, Prof. George E. Palade and the Romanian astronaut Dr. Dumitru-Dorin Prunariu. Some of the invaluable members have passed away but the legacy they left is still alive and cherished by ARA, its members, their families, and all of their friends.

ARA Academy continues the academic traditions for more than four decades, being the main organization in the Romanian diaspora that promotes remarkable Romanian achievements in arts and sciences.

Recently, the “*ARA Revival team*” that consists of 4 (four) ARA members: Acad. C. Corduneanu, O.Leonte, I.Costea and V.Staicu, self-appointed themselves in their fictional organization. The 4 people, along with D.Leonte (who is O.Leonte’s husband) are senior members of ARA who passively watched for 20 years the members’ effort to sustain a non-profit academic organization and did nothing to promote the academic values of ARA members. They falsely advertise on their website that Dinu Leonte is ARA Treasurer, and encourage contributions from members, even after he hijacked over \$26,000 from ARA bank accounts.

Dinu Leonte is not an ARA Treasurer, nor an ARA member. He was dismissed in November 2015 as a Treasurer of ARA and unanimously voted out on grounds of incompetency. The elected ARA Treasure for 2017-2021 is Vitorio Stana.

Using all possible means, they continue the misleading, undermining and fraudulent activities. Most recently, the “*ARA Revival team*” developed an illegal mirroring ARA website using logo and our members’ personal information. Continually, in a very hostile and outlawed way, the “*ARA Revival team*” uses members personal information without their consent or ARA BoD consent to communicate information detrimental to the ARA organization state of affairs, strategy, and objectives, largely affecting in a negative way the direction of a legal entity in good standing and strong commitments for its members and its future.

ARA Academy is not “ARA Revival”, and ARA members are not “ARA Revival” members.

The ARA treasury has been illegally taken by this group and is still not recovered up to this point. ARA is working with the proper authorities and banks to address this situation. There is an ongoing investigation. There were two accounts with deposits in two banks, which have been closed fraudulently by the “ARA Revival team”, without warning or notice.

ARA members have never been informed by “ARA Revival team” about the change in bank account ownership or how their money, over \$26,000, is managed.

The lists of the activities performed by the “ARA Revival team” are endless. Some of them are briefed below, as follows:

- 1) False accusations and misinformation of the public on Internet about the real ARA values and standards promoted by the ARA leadership in the last 20 years;
- 2) Misleading ARA members in a false interpretation of the ARA Bylaws and California Laws.
- 3) Illegal filing, on behalf of ARA, of the State of Information (SOI) paperwork with the California Secretary of State, using the information they have from the ARA archive in their possession; illegal use of ARA tax ID number.
- 4) Illegal and abusive holding of the ARA property and archives, including original incorporating documents, financial documents, ARA books and patrimony;
- 5) Illegal and abusive self-appointment (not elected) of the four people as “ARA Revival leadership” to represent members’ interest, without their knowledge, approval or permission;
- 6) Illegal identification in email correspondence to ARA members as “ARA office”, creating the false impression that the information comes from the ARA and not from “ARA Revival team”
- 7) Fraudulent assignment and operation of email account without members’ knowledge;
- 8) Fraudulent collections of membership fees for their “ARA Revival” using an illegal PayPal account and without ARA BoD knowledge;
- 9) Misappropriation of ARA funds and non-compliance with the California Code.
- 10) Unjustified funds from selling ARA copyrighted books and proceedings for a fee, without having registered selling rights;
- 11) Promote Conflict of Interest and nepotism to manage the ARA hijacked funds, without giving any explanations to ARA members.
- 12) False representation of ARA members during various events and organizations, including the Romanian Academy of which members were misled in believing that “ARA Revival Leadership” represents ARA Academy and its members.

NOTES: A list of key events is described in the Addendum 1.

ARA is a non-profit organization incorporated in the United States of America, State of California, in good standing with the state and federal applicable laws and regulations. Therefore ARA BoD notified all legal security entities about the aforementioned illegal and fraudulent activities, including Police, IRS, FBI and other related authorities, also educational institutions in Romania, denouncing with facts all the illegal events of “ARA Revival team”. ARA BoD is pursuing additional actions and is performing follow-ups with the legal authorities until this issue will be brought to a positive resolution for our ARA organization.

All of the above illegal actions committed, not suitable to any real democracy in the world, are totally unacceptable to us. ARA BoD would like to send a clear message to all its members to depart themselves from this group and its actions, also to stay away from any involvement or support of this false organization. This decision is part of the due diligence or duty we have all of us as a Board, as Members, Professionals aiming to send a clear message

to all community trying to destabilize a legal entity and its activities, in a democratic environment. We did not and will not tolerate any illegal activities in this organization and in our day to day activities as elite professionals in our fields.

For over a year now, the “*Revival group*” activities are of a great liability to all of us, but their actions are visibly weakening due to the lack of support from ARA members. Therefore, ARA BoD strongly encourages its Members to submit us emails or official letters to state their positions and denounce such activities.

Please feel free to provide ARA BoD any suggestions, concerns, feedback, requests for support in addressing the above issues, all for ARA organization protection as a legal official entity and your personal information security.

Thank you for your support of ARA legacy, strategy and of the elected ARA Board of Directors and its continual improvement initiatives.

Sincerely Yours,



Prof. Ruxandra Vidu, PhD
University of California, Davis
ARA President

on behalf of ARA Board of Directors.

Prof. Ruxandra Vidu, PhD, President (USA)
Prof. Ruxandra Botez, PhD, Vice-president (Canada),
Prof. Ioana Ionel, PhD, General Secretary (Romania)
Prof. Vitorio Stana, Tresurer (Canada),
Prof. Ioan Opreș, PhD, Counselor (SUA)
Prof. Ildiko Peter, PhD, Counselor (Italia)
Fr. Cezar Vasiliu, PhD, Counselor (Canada)

The American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences (ARA) is a scholarly organization dedicated to the analysis, study and dissemination of Romanian contributions and accomplishments. To enhance these efforts, ARA combines Western and Romanian intellectual traditions, encourages communications and serves as a point d'appui in the Western World for Romanian academics and intellectuals.

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ADDENDUM 1 – List of Key Events

November 24, 2015: Dinu Leonte was unanimously voted and removed from the Treasurer position on grounds of negligence and incompetency;

July 29, 2016: The General Assembly was held during the 40th ARA Congress, where the amendments to ARA Bylaws were proposed and discussed;

August 15, 2016: A new Treasurer, Vitorio Stana, has been appointed by the Board.

September 21, 2017: Amendments to ARA Bylaws have been adopted with a high approval rate. At the same time this decision has been followed by the adoption of the resolution of Board of Directors, which replaced the former Executive Committee, to assume the ARA Corporate Power and Governance, as it is expected for such organization incorporated in California. There were no elections of new members for the Board of Directors at that time.

October 2016: A sequence of very damaging events occurred such as:

- Oana Leonte's ARA membership has been revoked due to major flagrant violations of ARA bylaw requirements, gross misconduct;
- ARA BoD and membership was informed about a "*resolution*" that was signed by 4 people: Acad. C.Corduneanu, O.Leonte, I.Costea and V.Staicu. The notification came **one month after** the date of the resolution and **after** the ARA bank account was hightjacked. The so-called resolution **is a fake**, since it was not signed by the proper "ARA BoD members elected in 2013". Actually, only Costea and Staicu were elected BoD members in 2013. The resolution came **after the amendments to the new ARA bylaws were voted** by the ARA members, so the old BoD was not in effect anymore.
- The notification came **after** Dinu Leonte transferred the ARA money in his name and cancelled ARA debit cards, removed ARA President as the Agent of Service and processes for ARA at the California Secretary of State, all without the knowledge of the ARA President and/or the new Treasurer, both signers on the ARA bank account;
- Dinu Leonte has **never** informed ARA members about the change in bank account ownership
- Dinu Leonte's ARA membership has been revoked

January 2018: we noticed a new website called "*ARA Revival*" mirroring the official ARA website, with all the content text copied from the official ARA website. So called "*ARA Revival*", showing in the leadership Acad. Corduneanu, Oana and Dinu Leonte, has the same logo and included same ARA members as the ones listed in the official ARA website, without members' approval.

February 2017 - ARA President Prof. Ruxandra Vidu and Treasurer Prof. Vitorio Stana, opened a new account from zero with personal funds at another bank to find out soon after that bank account has been violated and the funds being taken again by Dinu Leonte.

April 2017 - a Congress of *ARA Revival* in Bucharest was announced on their website, which would take place in the same time with the 41st ARA Congress in Craiova. The place of the Congress of "*ARA Revival*" was changed from Bucharest to Targoviste, and then from Targoviste to Sinaia Palace. The Congress of *ARA Revival* did not have the ARA member support, other than Acad. Corduneanu, I.Costea, Oana and Dinu Leonte.