

MINUTES OF THE ICLA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING
University of Paris—Sorbonne (Paris IV) 16-17 July 2013

In attendance: Hans-Joachim Backe, Sandra Bermann, Hans Bertens, Jean Bessière, Lucia Boldrini, CHO Sung-Won, Francis Claudon, Marcel Cornis-Pope, Eduardo Coutinho, Ibra Diene, César Domínguez (July 17), Manfred Engel, Eugene Eoyang, Angela Esterhammer, Dorothy Figueira, John Burt Foster, Isabel Capeloa Gil, Gerald Gillespie, Marina Grishakova, Margaret Higonnet (July 17), INAGA Shigemi, Jasbir Jain, KAMIGAITO Ken'ichi, Alfons Knauth, Kathleen Komar, Pirjo Lyytikäinen, Marc Maufort, Chandra Mohan, Jean-Marc Moura, Suzanne Nalbantian, Anders Pettersson, Haun Saussy, Manfred Schmeling, Monica Schmitz-Emans, Steven Sondrup, Monica Spiridon, William Spurlin, Micéala Symington, Anne Tomiche, Hein Viljoen, YANG Huilin, ZHOU Xiaoyi, and John Zilcolsky.

Excused: Ute Heidmann.

First Session: July 16, 9:30 am.

The session was opened at 9:30 am by the ICLA President, Steven Sondrup. He thanked Anne Tomiche for her work in organizing the meeting of the ICLA Council. Anne Tomiche welcomed the council members and made several announcements regarding logistics.

The minutes of the Council's meeting at the University of Chicago, in September 2012, were approved unanimously. The agenda was approved after several adjustments in the order of the reports (it was agreed to add an item involving the Selection Committee and to treat Item 25 on the first day of the Council meeting).

The president reported on his activities during the year 2012-13. He gave an account of his collaboration with Anne Tomiche, the organizer of the Paris congress, and thanked her for the significant work she had accomplished. He mentioned his close collaboration with the editor-in-chief of the Association's journal, *Recherche littéraire/Literary Research*. He pointed out the difficulties occasioned by the periodical's high distribution costs. Steven Sondrup had worked with Hans Bertens in searching for a university willing to host the 2016 Congress. The president had also taken part in the activities surrounding the award of the Balakian Prize. He was happy to see a distinct rise in the Prize's prestige, as shown by the twenty submissions for the competition ending in 2013. Steven Sondrup recalled his involvement in the deliberations of the Structures Committee on the transition to electronic elections. He had also worked on increasing the ICLA's internet visibility. In Autumn 2012, along with Jean Bessière, he had represented the ICLA at a conference marking the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Portuguese Comparative Literature Association. In addition, the president mentioned his fruitful correspondence with new associations in Poland, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan, and the West Indies. As a conclusion, he emphasized the remarkable achievements of the ICLA's Research Committees. The president's report was unanimously approved.

John Burt Foster, the American secretary, gave his report. He first mentioned his translation into English of the minutes of the Council's Chicago meeting in 2012. He made the 2011 issue of *Literary Research* available in a PDF version, so that it can now be accessed on the Association's website. He undertook the preparation of the information brochure on the candidates for the ICLA election at Paris.

Marc Maufort, the European secretary, read his annual report. In October 2012, he worked on preparing the French version of the minutes of the Council's Chicago meeting. Along with Steven Sondrup, he also worked on organizing the Council's meeting in Paris. Steven Sondrup thanked the two secretaries for their work. Their reports were unanimously approved.

The three treasurers then delivered their reports. Steven Sondrup reminded the meeting that, accordingly to the French law, the European treasurer is the principal one, and the American treasurer and the treasurer for Asia are that treasurer's associates. As a result there exists just one treasury. All spending decisions are taken exclusively by the Association's Executive Council. KAMIGAITO Ken'ichi, the treasurer for Asia, indicated that the balance for his accounts amounted to \$47,681. Payment for publication of Literary Research had been carried out in part from this treasury. In the course of a comment on this report, Dorothy Figueira thanked KAMIGAITO Ken'ichi for the promptness of this payment. She was surprised, however, that the question of whether this expenditure was justified had been submitted beforehand to the President of the Japanese Association for his approval. This procedure seemed to her to be irregular. John Foster pointed out in this regard that it had been the custom to alternate responsibility for subsidizing Literary Research among the different regional treasuries. In this case the treasury for the Asian region had been asked to provide funds for two years in a row, which could have caused some surprise.

Kathleen Komar, the treasurer for North and South America, then read her report, which indicated that her balance sheet was in good order. Nonetheless, she pointed out that in 2012 she had not received contributions from the Brazilian, Peruvian, and Argentine associations. Micéala Symington, the treasurer for Europe and Africa, also announced a positive balance sheet, due in part to a deposit amounting to 35,000 Euros in a so-called "évolutif" savings account which offered an advantageous rate of interest. After delivery of these three reports, it was estimated that the ICLA's assets amounted to \$173,450. Micéala Symington having indicated the lack of payment from the Portuguese Association, Isabel Gil offered to contact the new president of that Association about this issue. The reports of the three treasurers were unanimously approved.

The president of the Selection Committee, Manfred Schmeling gave a brief report, after which he thanked Anne Tomiche for her unfailing help. He also thanked Hans-Joachim Backe, as well as Professors Thouret and Perroteux, two colleagues at the Sorbonne. The report was unanimously approved.

Jean-Marc Moura, President of the Structures Committee, then delivered his report. The Structures Committee considered that electronic voting made good sense within the Association. For that to take place it would be necessary for the General Assembly at the Paris Congress to arrive at a favorable decision on this point. The Statutes could be amended as follows: "The Executive Council of the Association is elected by the General Assembly, which is made up of the members of the Association in attendance, of those absent members who send signed proxies to representatives of their choice, and of those absent members who have voted by electronic ballot according to the procedure established by the Executive Council." The first electronic election could take place at the 2016 Congress. A debate then arose among the Council members concerning the method of electronic voting. In response to Manfred Engel's questions, Steven Sondrup explained that double voting could be avoided in every case: a password would be needed to vote electronically, and it could be used only once. He added that electronic voting could also be used for the members in attendance at the Congress. Hans Bertens asked if the voting system could be tested before 2016, to which Steven Sondrup replied affirmatively. Gerald Gillespie pointed out that it made sense to redefine the very notion of a General Assembly and to carefully limit the period of the vote (the end date needing to be placed before the second General Assembly). Jean Bessière insisted on the necessity of having a final list of members available at a definite point before the elections. The difficulty of maintaining the membership list provoked a certain number of comments. Steven Sondrup assured the Council that the regional lists received by the secretaries would be consolidated by the central secretariat at Brigham Young University. In conclusion, the president proposed that Jean-Marc Moura submit a proposal for the General Assembly which would take into account the issues discussed at this session. The Council then reached a favorable decision regarding electronic voting and unanimously approved the Committee's report.

Dorothy Figueira then reported on the publication of *Literary Research*, for which she was editor-in-chief. She pointed out that the next issue had almost been finalized. However, she also indicated that the expenses for distributing the journal had become excessive: in the past year they had risen to \$18,000. Moreover, she brought out the difficulty of keeping the membership list up to date. It obviously made sense to pay students for this work. For the moment, she proposed that the members of the Association be contacted in order to ask whether they preferred receiving an electronic or paper version of the journal. In that way it would clearly not be necessary to print and mail as many copies. Dorothy Figueira also proposed that a sum of \$1000 be allocated for handling expenses. Steven Sondrup explained that the quality of the electronic version would be identical to that of the published one. During the discussion Hans-Joachim Backe raised the possibility of having the journal published on different continents. Dorothy Figueira's report was unanimously approved.

Second Session, July 16, 2013, 2:00 pm.

Steven Sondrup raised the question of the Association's Bulletin, which is made available electronically on the Association's website, in French and English. He gave a brief history of this publication. Members learn of the Bulletin's appearance by RSS feed. The report was unanimously approved.

Hans Bertens presented the result of his inquiries for the 2016 Congress. With this task in view, he had chaired an ad hoc committee made up of the four vice presidents. It had been impossible to find a North American institution that was willing to organize the 2016 ICLA Congress. Hans Bertens had however received a proposal very recently from Achim Hölter of the University of Vienna. The costs for organizing this Congress, under the obligatory management of the university's "Congress Service," would be very high. The current budget foresees a deficit of 117,000 Euros. The registration fee would be set around 320 Euros for a total budget of about 300,000 Euros. The Congress would take place at the end of July 2016. Given a budget of such a large amount, Hans Bertens felt that it would make sense to try to renegotiate the charges at a lower rate. Gerald Gillespie then raised the question of how the General Assembly could vote on a proposal that had to remain so tentative. William Spurlin believed that the registration fees risked being too high for young colleagues. Anne Tomiche felt that Achim Hölter should furnish some indication of the size of the subsidies that he thought he could obtain. Eugene Eoyang thought that it made sense to consider alternative sites, in case organizing this congress would be too costly. Manfred Schmeling regretted the lack of a precise thematic focus and hoped that the Council would be informed of one as soon as possible. In view of the doubts that remained, it was decided to postpone any decision on this issue until the next morning. In the interval, Hans Bertens would try to contact Achim Hölter by email.

Monika Schmitz-Emans then delivered her report on the Balakian Prize, over the selection of which she presided. She was pleased with the success of the Prize this year, since it had received twenty submissions. It has been decided to award the Balakian Prize to Aurélie Hetzel (France) for her work *The Queen of Sheba: From Tradition to Literary Myth*. In addition, an honorable mention has been given to Chao Shun-liang (Taiwan) for his book: *Rethinking the Concept of the Grotesque: Crashaw, Baudelaire, Magritte*. In response to a question from Isabel Gil concerning the language in which the works submitted needed to be written, Monika Schmitz-Emans answered that the official languages of the ICLA, French or English, were customary. If the book was not written in one of the official languages, a summary needed to be furnished. It was the rule in that case to find a competent reader. Eugene Eoyang added a comment on the good financial health of the Balakian Fund. Steven Sondrup opined nonetheless that the new treasurers should consider launching campaigns to raise money for the Fund. He recalled in addition that in the beginning Douwe Fokkema had stipulated that the Prize should be accompanied by a travel scholarship funded by the ICLA. It was therefore proposed to allocate a sum of at most \$1000 for the Prize winner's travel expenses. The report was accepted unanimously.

Manfred Engel, in his capacity as Chair of the Nominations Committee, was the next on the agenda. He informed the Council members that a new nomination had been received for the list of assessors. It involved our Bulgarian colleague Roumania Latchezarova Stantcheva. This nomination was in good order since it had been accompanied by the seven requisite signatures. Manfred Engel accordingly presented the candidate's vita.

Hans-Joachim Backe gave the report of the ad hoc Committee on the Association's Future. The Committee put forward several proposals meant to improve the ICLA's visibility, especially with young scholars. According to the Committee, the overall structure for the circulation of information within the ICLA would need to be reevaluated. A large-scale procedure was suggested: on the one hand, the compilation in a single place of the scattered pieces of information relating to the ICLA's institutional memory and, on the other hand, a more democratic manner of communication with the members. For this purpose, a complete guide to the research interests of all the members with a

search engine should facilitate contacts. Such a tool should be based on Media-wiki technology. The general framework for this tool could be put in place in the three upcoming years, at first within the Executive Council and the ICLA Research Committees. In addition, the Committee suggested that efforts be made to recruit young members following the model set by the Gender Studies Committee. This Committee had added new members by encouraging them to take part in the seminars that it organized. From this perspective, it made sense for the Chairs of the Research Committees to obtain a right to vote on the Executive Council, given the importance of their activities for the future of the Association. In the discussion that followed the summary of the report, the idea of a Media-wiki guide met with general agreement, given that this method would give greater visibility to the work of the Research Committees. It was therefore proposed to grant a budget of \$3,000 to put in place a Media-wiki system. Steven Sondrup will take responsibility for the co-ordination of this project. The report was unanimously accepted. The president adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.

Third session, 17 July, 9:00 am.

At the beginning of the meeting, the President decided to return to the item of business involving the next ICLA Congress in 2016. A discussion arose over the maximum size of the registration fee that could be required, the amount of 320 Euros having been suggested during the debate of the day before. The majority of the Council members settled on a maximum of 200 Euros for regular members and of 75 Euros for members entitled to a reduced rate (delegates from developing countries, students). Hans Bertens explained that if Achim Hölder could obtain a subsidy of 120,000 Euros, a registration fee of 135 Euros would be sufficient. Failing that, it would be necessary to ask for 185 Euros. Achim Hölder would be contacted on this point, and, if ampler information was available, it would be communicated at the General Assembly. Hans Bertens then pointed out that the theme proposed for the Vienna Congress would be the following: "Comparatism and the Many Languages of World Literature." Moderately priced hotels are available at this time of year in Vienna.

Margaret Higonnet and Marcel Cornis-Pope then delivered a report on the activities of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of the Literatures in European Languages. They stated that there had been many positive reviews of the volumes published by the Committee. Beginning in July 2013, the Committee will be chaired by Marcel Cornis-Pope. The five-year report of the International Academic Union on the activities of the Committee was very favorable. Many projects are making great progress, leading to some major expenses for translation, indexing, and editing in 2013-14. It was therefore proposed to award the Committee a budget of 6,000 Euros. The grant of this subsidy was unanimously accepted. As the result of a problem in selecting the Committee's workshops for the Paris Congress, it was proposed that, in the future, the submissions of the Coordinating Committee should be forwarded by one person only, in this case the Committee Chair. The Council unanimously supported this suggestion. The report was unanimously approved. César Domínguez delivered the report of the Research Committee. In 2013 the Committee accepted one new research project, "Literary and Cultural History of the Dream," under the direction of Manfred Engel and Bernard Dieterle. Steven Sondrup reminded the meeting that research projects in progress are evaluated on a yearly basis by the ICLA Executive Council.

Sandra Bermann gave an overview of the progress made in her new Translation Studies Committee. She hoped to meet potential members during the Paris Congress. She was thinking of finalizing the establishment of the Committee by the end of Summer 2013 and envisioned having a Committee meeting at Princeton in Spring or Autumn 2014. One of several possible research projects would be structured around the theme of "translation and migration." Jasbir Jain suggested two Indian colleagues who might be asked to participate. The report was unanimously accepted.

Suzanne Nalbantian gave a report on the activities of her Research Committee, "Literature and Neuroscience," which focused during the past year on the interdisciplinary study of consciousness, from a perspective that united literature and the recent discoveries of neuroscience. A volume of critical essays on the subject is on the path to completion. The Committee has organized four sessions within the framework of the Paris Congress, in which specialists in literature and neuroscience took part. Next year the Committee will concentrate on the study of creativity. This report led to a debate on the notions of fiction, science, and mind. The report was unanimously approved.

John Zilcosky outlined the activities of his Committee on Literary Theory. In May 2012 the Committee met at the University of Richmond in Virginia for a workshop on "Animals and Literary Theory." The workshop organized at the 2013 Paris Congress deals with the theme "The Art of Not Thinking." In 2014 the Committee's workshop will be held at the University of Osaka. Publication of the Committee's workshop proceedings is being discussed with the publisher DeGruyter. In the debate period, Steven Sondrup asked about the relatively small number of Committee members. Dorothy Figueira insisted on the notion of openness of the Research Committees. John Zilcosky

explained that the Committee would make an effort to welcome a greater number of invited members. The report was unanimously approved.

Alfons Knauth delivered the final report on the activities of his Research Committee on “Multilingualism in World Literature.” He reminded the Council of the different conferences organized by the Committee since 2009. Three books had appeared with the publisher LIT Verlag in Berlin: *Translation & Multilingualism/Traduction et Littérature multilingue*, *Imaginaire et idéologie du plurilinguisme littéraire et numérique*, and *Migrancy and Multilingualism*. The proceedings of the 2013 workshop, held at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, will be published next year in India. Finally, at the 2013 ICLA Congress in Paris, members of the Committee will participate in a workshop organized by Britta Benert, “Literary Multilingualism 1900.” The report was unanimously approved.

Fourth Session, 17 July, 2:00 pm.

William Spurlin gave an account of the activities of his Committee on Gender Studies. He reported on the Committee's workshops at the 2013 Toronto Congress of the American Comparative Literature Association, on the theme "Sex Shocks Across Borders: Gendering Mobility and Monstrosity." At the ICLA's Paris Congress, the Committee will sponsor five seminars on the theme "Comparing Queerly/Queering Comparison: Transformative Approaches to Comparative Studies." In addition, the Committee's work will appear in special issues of Comparative Literature Studies ("The Gender and Sexual Politics of Translation: Literary, Historical, and Cultural Approaches") and the Journal of Medical Humanities ("Critical Healing: Queer and Disability Studies Interventions in Biomedicine and Public Health"). Looking ahead to the organization of seminars outside North America, the Committee will appeal to the ICLA for financial support. The report was unanimously approved.

At the end of his report, William Spurlin indicated that the role of Research Committee Chairs within the ICLA's Executive Council ought to be reviewed. It would make sense to give them the right to vote, because their committees contribute significantly to the Association's development. A debate of this point arose among the Council members. Gerald Gillespie reminded the audience that the Research Committees were created by the ICLA's Executive Council, which had the power to dissolve them. The electorate for these committees is therefore more limited than the one for Council members. To grant voting rights would require an amendment to the Association's statutes, and a proposal in that sense would have to be submitted to the General Assembly. The Council not having been informed of this request within a reasonable length of time, it would be impossible to reach a decision during the Paris Congress. Kathleen Komar explained that Dr. William Spurlin's intention was simply to get a discussion started. She believed that it would be necessary to consider giving voting rights to the Chairs of the principal committees. Manfred Engel shared Gerald Gillespie's opinion. The Chairs of the committees can in any case contribute to the Council's discussions, a right that is doubtless just as important as the formal right to vote. Lucia Boldrini emphasized the committees' essential role in developing the discipline. Hans Bertens shared her opinion. He suggested therefore that a right to vote be granted to a limited number of representatives of the Research Committees (for example, two electoral seats). Peter Hajdu held that it would not be democratic to give a right to vote to the Chairs of the Research Committees, given that they were not elected by the members of the Association as a group. Anders Pettersson suggested that a small committee study the proposal and report on its conclusions at the 2014 Council meeting. Steven Sondrup thought that it made sense to submit this proposal to the new president, who would forward it to the Structures Committee. After studying this proposal, the Structures Committee could make a report to the Council. A motion was then introduced: it was proposed that Hans Bertens and Anders Pettersson study this proposal and then submit it to the Structures Committee. This motion was approved by a majority vote of 18 to 1.

Chandra Mohan delivered the report on the activities of his committee, "Literary and Cultural Interrelations between India, its Neighboring Countries, and the World." He mentioned organization of a conference on the theme "Traditions of Dissent in the Sub-Continental Literatures and Cultures (Central University of Kerala, Kasaragod, October 2012). He also pointed out the organization of sessions related to his committee's research at the international comparative literature conference at Jadavpur University (Kolkata, January 2013). Fifteen presentations were on the program at the Paris Congress. He reported on the publication of three books on subjects that concerned the committee: Travelling with the Namah, Cultural Narratives: Hybridity and Other Essays, and Medieval Indian Legacy: Linguistic and Literary. In 2014 the committee will collaborate with the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and will organize a literary festival spotlighting the work of Indian writers and poets. Steven Sondrup pointed out that

the ICLA could play a role in distributing the publications mentioned by Chandra Mohan. The report was unanimously accepted.

YANG Huilin summarized the report of the activities of his Committee, “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies.” He mentioned the appearance of two issues of the Journal for the Study of Christian Culture. A Summer Institute, jointly organized by Renmin University, the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Center for Sino-Christian Studies would be held in August 2013. Professor David Ford of Cambridge will be invited to Renmin University in October 2013 and will give a public lecture with the title “Imaginative and Practical Christianity.” Finally the research project “A Collected Exegetical Interpretation of English Translations and Commentaries of Chinese Classics” had received a subsidy equivalent to \$98,000. The report was unanimously approved. Returning to the question concerning the organization of the 2016 ICLA congress, Yang Huilin informed the Council members of the possibility of organizing that event in China, in case the Vienna option did not work out.

Haun Saussy then introduced a request for a subsidy of \$2,000 for publication of the proceedings of the conference which he had organized at the meeting of the ICLA Council in Chicago in 2012: “Intersections, Interferences, Interdisciplines: Literature with Other Arts.” Haun Saussy and Gerald Gillespie reported to the Council on the progress of the publication. The request for a subvention was unanimously approved.

Hans-Joachim Backe then reported on the activities of the Committee which he directed, Comparative Literature in the Digital Age. This committee’s research will be well represented at the Paris Congress, with 20 presentations distributed among five thematic sections. Various publication possibilities for these papers are envisioned. The report was unanimously approved.

Sung-won CHO then presented the two volumes of proceedings from the Seoul Congress, which had just appeared. A third volume in Korean will be published next year. The Council warmly congratulated Sung-won CHO for all her work.

Steven Sondrup adjourned the meeting of the ICLA Council at 4:40 pm after having thanked his colleagues for their assistance during the three years of his presidential mandate.

Respectfully,
Marc Maufort
General Secretary

Translated by
John Burt Foster
American Secretary

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE OLD AND NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCILS OF THE ICLA

University of Paris—Sorbonne (Paris IV) 24 July 2013

In attendance: Hans-Joachim Backe, Christine Baron, Lucia Boldrini, Sandra Bermann, Hans Bertens, Jean Bessière, CHO Sung-Won, John Burt Foster, Massimo Fusillo, Gerald Gillespie, Marina Grishakova, Peter Hajdu, Ute Heidmann, Achim Hölter, KAMAGAITO Ken'ichi, Kathleen Komar, Anders Pettersson, Steven Sondrup, William Spurlin, Micéala Symington, Anne Tomiche, and YANG Huilin.

Session was called to order at 5:30 pm.

The new President, Hans Bertens, welcomed all the members and moved that Steven Sondrup be made a member of the Committee of Honor in his capacity as Former President. This motion was unanimously approved by acclamation.

The President Hans Bertens made several comments regarding the open and frank rapport he hoped to have with the Council members in his position as president. He thanked Anne Tomiche for her hospitable attitude and for her excellent organization of the Paris Congress.

Concerning the request that the Chairs of the Research Committees be granted voting rights within the ICLA Council, the president asked Anders Pettersson to study this issue in order to present a proposal to the Council.

There have been proposals to host the next Executive Council meeting. The first comes from China, at a site in the North-East at a distance of an hour and a half by plane from Beijing; the second was made by the University of Tallinn in Estonia.

President Hans Bertens proposed to the Executive Council that he would reflect on this issue and would get back to the members in two months.

Regarding the statutes and bylaws of the ICLA, a request was made to increase their accessibility to members. Steven Sondrup proposed putting all the ICLA's bylaws and statutes on the Association's website.

Kathleen Komar asked as well that the ICLA's archives be digitalized and made accessible.

The President adjourned the session at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Micéala Symington
General Secretary

Translated into English,
John Burt Foster, Jr.
American Secretary