

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ICLA
University of Paris—Sorbonne (Paris IV) 18 July 2013**

The General Assembly was opened at 2:30 p.m. by the President of the ICLA, Steven reported on his activities over the past three years. He mentioned the part he took in organizing Executive Council meetings in London, Chicago, and Paris. He also worked with Manfred Engel, the chair of the Nominations Committee, to establish the list of candidates for the elections in Paris. He was associated with the search for an institution that might be interested in organizing the ICLA'S 2016 Congress. He participated in the work of the Structures Committee, the Co-ordination Committee for the comparative history of literatures in European languages, as well as that of the Balakian Prize Committee. He represented the ICLA at various international meetings, in London, Osaka, and Aveiro. Steven Sondrup concluded by thanking all those who had aided his efforts. The report was unanimously approved.

The Secretaries then gave their three-year reports. John Foster, the American secretary, mentioned his participation in a meeting at Salt Lake City in October 2010 with Steven Sondrup, Marc Maufort, and Dorothy Figueira. This meeting was meant to settle on new directions for running the ICLA in the period 2010-2013. John Foster highlighted his part in transferring the editorial responsibilities for the ICLA's journal *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* to Dorothy Figueira. He mentioned that he had translated into English the minutes of the business meetings at Seoul, London, and Chicago. He had contacted the regional associations in North and South America in order to obtain their membership lists. He had also prepared the information brochure on the candidates for the Congress's election in Paris. Finally, he had negotiated the publication rights for an English translation of the plenary talk given by Herta Müller in Seoul, both for *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* and for the congress proceedings. The European secretary, Marc Maufort, also mentioned his participation in the Salt Lake City meeting to which John Foster referred. During his second term, he dealt mainly with preparing the French version of the minutes of the Executive Council's meetings in Pusan, Seoul, London, and Chicago. He will also be concerned with preparing the French version of the minutes of the various ICLA business meetings in Paris. Over the course of 2011 he was in contact with the treasurers of the comparative literature associations in Europe and Africa with the goal of strengthening the connections between these national associations and the ICLA. At the end of 2011, in co-operation with Anne Tomiche, he contributed to the distribution of information about the 2013 Congress in Paris. Finally, he occasionally lent a hand to Dorothy Figueira in translating some correspondence involving *Recherche littéraire* into French. At the end of his two terms as general Secretary, Marc Maufort made a point of expressing his gratitude to the Association for having entrusted him with this responsibility, which had been a highly enriching experience for him.

Micéala Symington, the treasurer for Europe and Africa, followed with a consolidated report on the Association's finances over the last three years, which brought together the European, American, and Asian accounts. She confirmed the good financial health of the ICLA. The reports of the Secretaries and the Treasurer were unanimously approved.

Dorothy Figueira then took the floor to describe the editorial policy of the ICLA's journal, *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research*, for which she is the editor-in-chief. The journal contains book reviews, conference reports, and overviews of the activities of the ICLA's Research Committees. She encouraged active participation on the part of all the Association's members. Attention then turned to the award of the Balakian Prize, which is given to a young colleague in comparative literature in recognition of his or her first book. In her opening words, Suzanne Nalbantian, the daughter of Anna Balakian, in whose honor the prize was established, made some remarks in her mother's memory. Monika Schmitz-Emans then introduced the books which, this year, had especially attracted the jury's attention. The Balakian Prize had been granted to Aurélia Hetzel for her work *The Queen of Sheba: From Tradition to Literary Myth*. An honorable mention was likewise awarded to Chao Shun-liang for his work *Rethinking the Concept of the Grotesque* :

Crashaw, Baudelaire, Magritte. The two authors were greeted with warm applause by the General Assembly. Steven Sondrup then reminded the audience of the conditions that had to be met by contestants for the prize.

In the name of the Structures Committee, Jean-Marc Moura introduced a motion proposing that the ICLA's elections should take place electronically beginning with the 2016 Congress. This motion, which had been discussed in detail during the Executive Council meeting and had been unanimously approved by that group, proposed that the ICLA's Statutes 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.” This motion was approved unanimously by the General Assembly, and the ICLA's Statutes will be modified accordingly.

John Foster reminded the audience of the hours that the Electoral Bureau would be open during the Congress and asked for 5 or 6 members to act as helpers in the course of the vote and the counting of the ballots.

The President adjourned the session at 3:30 pm.