

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING
Goldsmiths College, University of London, United Kingdom, 14–15 September 2011.

Members in Attendance: Hans-Joachim Backe, Hans Bertens, Jean Bessière, Cho Sung-Won, Francis Claudon, Eduardo Coutinho, Angela Esterhammer, John Burt Foster, Isabel Capelo Gil, Marina Grishakova, Peter Hajdu, Ute Heidmann, Jasbir Jain, Kamigaito Ken'ichi, Alfons Knauth, Kathleen Komar, Pirjo Lyytikäinen, Marc Maufort, Chandra Mohan, Anders Pettersson, Haun Saussy, Manfred Schmeling, Steven Shankman, Inaga Shigemi, Steven Sondrup, Monica Spiridon, William Spurlin, Micéala Symington, Anne Tomiche, Zhang Longxi, Zhou Xiaoyi.

First Meeting, 14 September 2011, 9:30 AM.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by the ICLA President, Steven Sondrup. He thanked Lucia Boldrini for having agreed to organize the ICLA Executive Council meeting at Goldsmiths College. Lucia Boldrini responded by welcoming the Council members to her university and welcomed them as well to the colloquium on “Fractured, Transformed, Travelling Narratives in Writing, Performance and the Arts,” which was to follow the Council’s deliberations. The assembled members offered a lively expression of gratitude to Lucia Boldrini.

The agenda for the meeting was approved unanimously. The first order of business involved approval of the minutes for the different meetings at Pusan and Seoul in August 2010. They were unanimously approved.

The President then reported on his activities for the past year. First he thanked all the colleagues with whom he had had the pleasure of working during this period, especially the two secretaries. He mentioned that many Research Committees were already active, though several still needed to be constituted. He gave an account of various important meetings that were held in 2010-11. In October 2010 he had welcomed Dorothy Figueira, John Burt Foster, and Marc Maufort to his institution, Brigham Young University in Provo (Utah, USA), in order to finalize some new strategies for the operation of the Association and for the journal *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* (hereafter, RL / LR). In Spring 2011, after having attended the business meeting of the Coordinating Committee in Lisbon, he met Anne Tomiche in Paris to discuss preparations for the 2013 Congress. In Paris he also met with Jean-Marc Moura, Chair of the Structures Committee, in order to consult with him about some delicate points involving voting procedures. Then, in Saarbrücken, he talked with Manfred Engel with the aim of constituting the Nominating Committee. During the summer he worked with the two editors of RL / LR, at a particularly difficult time of transition, in order to find solutions that would make the journal a genuine means for heightening the Association’s visibility. In addition, Steven Sondrup devoted himself to updating the format of the Association’s website, which publishes many announcements of publications and conferences, in both French and English. Together with the two secretaries, he strengthened our ties with regional and national organizations, doing so with the goal of obtaining more complete membership lists. In December 2010 Steven Sondrup represented the ICLA at the official launch of the *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe*, published under the auspices of the Coordinating Committee and edited by Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer. For technical reasons, the President wanted to transfer the Balakian Prize Fund to the Association’s European account, while ensuring that the Fund remained separate from the rest of the ICLA’s endowment. The President was also concerned with equitably dividing the ICLA’s financial resources among its European, Asian, and American bank accounts. Finally, in July 2011, he arranged to have the announcement of the Paris Congress placed on the Association’s website. The President’s report was unanimously approved.

Marc Maufort, the European secretary, then read his annual report. In September 2010, he set to work on the official French minutes of the various meetings in Pusan and Seoul. He collaborated regularly with the President, Steven Sondrup, and the American secretary, notably by taking part in a meeting organized at the end of October by the President at Brigham Young University, the institution where he teaches. It was at this meeting that Marc Maufort was charged with contacting the various treasurers of the regional associations in Europe and Africa, in order to strengthen their ties with the ICLA. He also mentioned the recent appearance of the volume *Old Margins and New Centers: The European Literary Heritage in an Age of Globalization*, which contained a selection of papers given at the ICLA colloquium in Brussels in 2009. He also prepared, in concert with Steven Sondrup, the organization of the Council's current meeting. His report was unanimously approved.

John Burt Foster, the American secretary, presented his report. He mentioned his work in preparing an English translation of the minutes from Pusan and Seoul. He also collected the addresses of the ICLA Council members when asked for these addresses by our colleague Inaga Shigemi. In addition, he attempted to establish as precise a list as possible of ICLA members in the Americas and Asia. His report received unanimous approval.

John Burt Foster then read his report dealing with publication of RL / LR. The journal went through a transition period in 2011, due to John Burt Foster's three-year term as editor in chief having ended. A new editor, Dorothy Figueira, had been belatedly appointed. John Burt Foster and Dorothy Figueira therefore collaborated on publishing the 2011 issue of RL / LR. As a result of other professional obligations, they were not able to do so until June 2011. For this issue John Burt Foster took charge of editing certain articles (notably the text of Herta Müller's talk at Seoul). He took pains to settle the reprint rights for this article with the German publisher involved, Carl Hanser Verlag. The issue will have about 96 pages. John Burt Foster recommended that the Council clearly limit the terms for the journal's editors in chief to a period of three years, and that the new editor be named no less than six months before the ICLA's triennial congress is held.

Dorothy Figueira's report was read in her absence by John Burt Foster. Dorothy Figueira encouraged the Council to support publication of RL / LR as an essential tool for increasing the visibility of the ICLA. Many national and regional associations consider the appearance of this journal as their main link with the ICLA. Dorothy Figueira has obtained some financial support for 2012 from her institution, the University of Georgia. This subsidy of \$6,000 will probably be renewed in years to come. Dorothy Figueira will nonetheless need to request \$5,000 from the ICLA for extra editing expenses. Dorothy Figueira invited the Council members to support the efforts of the editor in chief and to seek out potential contributors for the journal in their respective countries. In the future the journal proposes to publish more reviews of works completed by the various ICLA research committees, in order to make their activities better known to the members. Works written in languages other than French and English will be the object of reviews. Reports concerning the programs of national congresses will be included. Editorial policy will seek, in addition, to have reviews written by specialists living in other countries or even other continents than the authors. John Burt Foster clarified that ICLA funds of \$5,000 for the editor were necessary so that Dorothy Figueira could benefit from a course relief that would permit her to devote more time to her editorial duties. During the discussion that followed these two reports, the Council asserted its willingness to support the efforts of the editor in chief to ensure visibility for RL / LR, especially in seeking potential contributors. The question was also raised of whether the Association could permit itself to make these financial investments. It was decided to award the journal a budget of \$21,000 for a single year. The reports were approved with a majority vote (there was one abstention).

Steven Sondrup then reported on the activities of the Association Bulletin, which can be accessed electronically in French and English at the Association's website. Members are informed of the appearance of the Bulletin by RSS feed. Dissemination of information on accessing the Bulletin has been hindered by the fact that the Association has at its disposal just a fraction of the email addresses of the members of the national and regional associations. Accordingly Steven Sondrup raised the question of knowing how the Bulletin could be made more accessible. Allusion was made to the refusal of the Japanese Association to pass the email addresses of its members on to the ICLA. Kenichi Kamigaito indicated that the Japanese Association could go back on its decision, if the ICLA President expressly asked that it do so. The following motion was unanimously approved: the President will request that all the national associations turn over to him the list of their members' email addresses.

The President indicated that for technical reasons the fund for the Balakian Prize had to be transferred to the Association's French account. The prize having been awarded twice up to now, he posed the question of knowing whether it made sense at this point to undertake a campaign to raise additional funds. The principal of the fund amounts to \$14,253. Hans Bertens and John Burt Foster then pointed out that, in view of the periodical nature of the prize (it is awarded every three years), the Association could still give itself some time to reflect on this point. Margaret Higonnet suggested the possibility of renaming the fund to honor the memory of Douwe Fokkema. Responding to this suggestion, Steven Sondrup indicated that the Association should in fact give thought to the most suitable manner of honoring Douwe Fokkema's memory. For her part Angela Esterhammer suggested that the amount of the prize be reduced to \$1,000, a proposal that seemed to meet with general approval. At the end of the first meeting, Steven Sondrup recalled the final dissolution of the Tanya Carvalhal fund.

Second Meeting, 14 September 2011, 2:00 PM.

At the opening of the second meeting, the President gave the word to Anne Tomiche, who chairs the Organizing Committee for the Paris Congress, which will have the theme of “Comparative Literature as a Critical Approach.” She reported to the Council on progress in their work. The organizing committee benefits at present from the support of 25 French universities, to which have just been added the universities of Saarbrücken and Lausanne. The Congress will take place at the Centre Malesherbes, which offers everything to be desired in the way of infrastructure. The organizing committee’s budget however is very tight, and the question arises of knowing how to make sure a printed invitation reaches all ICLA members. The President, Steven Sondrup, indicated his preference for a distribution of circulars by ordinary mail, while Anne Tomiche favored an electronic distribution using the presidents of the national and regional organizations as intermediaries. Steven Sondrup feared however that an electronic approach would not result in a sufficient number of paper proposals, given that such had been the case with the Seoul Congress. Anne Tomiche responded that she did not have the budget needed for proceeding with a mailing. A long debate followed among the Council members who favored one or the other solution. The following motion resulted from the debate: it was proposed to proceed with an electronic distribution of invitations during a first period (with the aid of the ICLA secretaries). If the Committee does not receive enough paper proposals, alternative arrangements will need to be made after January 15, 2012. The vote on this motion received 18 votes for, 1 against, and 1 abstention. The motion was therefore approved. The President then suggested to the organizer of the Paris Congress that she arrange several options for excursions, in order to observe the custom of previous ICLA congresses. Anne Tomiche, who had planned an excursion to Versailles for all participants, responded that the financial means at her disposal made it difficult to realize this suggestion. Several members of the Council pointed out as well that it would be easy for the participants themselves to make use of the internet to reserve other excursions. Jasbir Jain regretted in addition that the high cost of the registration fee would not allow colleagues who were not as well supported financially by their institutions to take part in the Congress. A vote on the contents of the report presented by Anne Tomiche was requested by several members of the Council, although the President explained that this vote was not at all needed. The vote on the report was nonetheless organized. The report was accepted by the majority, with one abstention.

Steven Sondrup informed the members of the Council that he had not yet been able to find a colleague who was willing to chair the Selection Committee for the Paris Congress. He would continue his efforts to find a candidate for this position. The President mentioned as well that at present we do not have any proposal for organizing the 2016 Congress. He will continue to seek universities and teams of colleagues open to making bids for this opportunity.

On being asked by the President, Kamigaito Ken’ichi added several specifics regarding the final report on the work of the Research Committee on the Far East, which he had chaired in 2010. Kamigaito Ken’ichi confirmed that he would find a competent editor for the English version of the volume East Asian Comparative Literature History. In the meantime, the preliminary version of this work could only be consulted via limited access.

Chandra Mohan then read his project proposal for a new Research Committee on the Indian Subcontinent, which had already received the endorsement of the Research Committee. Entitled “Literary and Cultural Inter-Relationships between India, Its Neighboring Countries and the World,” this committee has the goal of examining convergences and divergences among the histories of countries like India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, and the Maldivian Islands in a global literary and cultural context. The Council gave its unanimous approval to the creation of this committee for a term of three years.

The proposal coming from Yang Huilin to create a new research committee, “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies,” was presented next. This committee intends to deepen current tendencies that aim to offer comparative readings of the scriptures from the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions along with the Chinese classics. The project is thus strongly intercultural, interlinguistic, and interdisciplinary. By a majority, the Council gave its approval to the creation of this new Committee for a term of three years (one abstention).

The session was adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Third Session, 15 September 2011, 9:00 PM.

At the opening of the third session, the President, Steven Sondrup, explained the nature of his abstention from the vote on the report dealing with the organization of the Paris Congress, which had taken place the preceding day. He wanted to make it clear that his abstention had to do solely with the fact that he found any vote superfluous for technical reasons. This abstention should not in any way be considered as a disapproval of the progress made by Anne Tomiche and her team. Our colleague Anne Tomiche can thus be assured of the ICLA President's unconditional support.

The three treasurers then read their annual reports. Micéala Symington reported an income of 12,046 Euros thanks to contributions from the national associations. Expenditures amounted to 7,478.58 Euros. Micéala Symington pointed out that income from financial charges did not exceed 344.33 Euros, due to the fall in interest rates given by the banks. The Balakian Fund, which amounts to 14,254 Euros, has been given separate banking codes. After Micéala Symington's report, it was agreed that the question of whether to reduce the amount of the Balakian Prize should be examined at the next meeting of the Council. Kathleen Komar, the American treasurer, reported a balance of \$32,638.94 in the American account (which does not bear interest, since it involves an account held by the University of California at Los Angeles). Kamigaito Ken'ichi, the Asian treasurer, reported that he had converted 1,900,000 yen into American dollars following the sudden fall in the exchange rate for Japanese currency after the March 2011 earthquake. The Asian treasurer is in charge of two accounts, one in yen, the other in American dollars. The Council unanimously approved this decision to make the conversion into dollars. In addition, Kamigaito Ken'ichi pointed out that it will be difficult for the Japanese colleagues to maintain their contribution of 10,000 yen per member, given the change in exchange rates. The reports of the three treasurers were unanimously approved.

In the absence of Manfred Engel, the report of the Nominating Committee was read by Marc Maufort. The committee has not yet been fully constituted: two additional members need to be chosen in North America and Asia. A proposal for constituting the new ICLA Council will be presented by the committee next year. From this perspective, the assessors who do not want to be considered for a second term are invited to inform Manfred Engel of that fact. The report was unanimously accepted.

In the absence of Jean-Marc Moura, the report of the Structures Committee was read by Steven Sondrup. The Committee recommends that an electronic voting method be followed in the triennial elections, given that this method would permit colleagues unable to attend the conference still to take part in the voting. The ICLA bylaws are governed, under the French civil code, by the Association Law of 1901. To authorize electronic voting, it would be necessary to amend Point 4 of the bylaws, something that can be done at the earliest only at the General Assembly of the 2013 Paris Congress. The technical aspects of the vote would have to be examined by specialists. An electronic vote of this kind could only take place for the first time at the 2016 Congress. Steven Sondrup clarified that, according to the terms of the French law, the voting period would have to be strictly limited to the length of the Congress. Steven Sondrup requested that the Council put him in charge of examining the practical aspects of adopting this procedure, for which the estimated cost would be \$3,500. This method would have the advantage of encouraging the national and regional associations to send the ICLA their members' email addresses. The Council unanimously accepted the report and authorized Steven Sondrup to explore the methods of electronic voting.

In the absence of César Dominguez, Steven Sondrup read the report of the Research Committee. The committee is presently made up of the following members: Zhao Baisheng, Sibylle Baumbach, Montserrat Cots, Bala Venkat Mani, Mariano Siskind, Jola Skulj, Mads Rosendhal Thomsen, and

Hein Viljoen. These members were chosen with an eye to the greatest possible geographical coverage and widest variety of specialties. The committee has already approved the formation of two new research committees (see above). Several proposals are currently being reviewed, coming from Suzanne Nalbantian, Elizabeth Lanza, Biaggio d'Angelo, and Dorothy Figueira and Steven Shankman. Specific procedures have been put in place for submitting a request to create new research committees (details may be obtained from César Domínguez at the following address: cesar.dominguez@usc.es). The report was unanimously approved.

Steven Shankman then reported on the dissolution of the Intercultural Studies Committee, which he chaired until 2010. He considered Council's decision to dissolve the committee, without having given him notice in advance, to be rather inelegant, especially since the work of this committee (which was one of the ICLA's few permanent committees) was central to the Association's interests. Steven Shankman had decided not to take part in the Seoul Congress because, due to technical difficulties, none of the seminars which he had planned to organize had materialized. He had nonetheless sent an activities report to the Council. He now invited the Council to look into this problem, for the dissolution of this committee has created a real vacuum at the heart of our research activities. In any case, Steven Shankman, together with Dorothy Figueira, will soon submit a request to create a new research committee on ethics and religion. This committee has already operated in an informal manner as a sub-group within the Intercultural Studies Committee, even though the perspectives of the two committees did not fully intersect. A discussion then began on this point. The dissolution had been decided at Seoul on a motion coming from President Manfred Schmeling. Moreover, the latter had invited Steven Shankman to submit a request to create a committee focused on a new theme. The Council considered the question of whether the committee could be reestablished. Steven Shankman explained that he would not agree to chair the committee, even if it should be reestablished. William Spurlin pointed out the current importance of transcultural studies. Kathleen Komar asked if there existed a specific procedure for dissolving a permanent committee. Jean Bessière explained that every committee could be dissolved, after several activity reports that were judged inadequate. Micéala Symington asked whether that procedure had been respected in this case. Jean Bessière then explained that every committee could be reinstated after an interval of several years, something that had already been the case with the permanent Committee on Literary Theory, which was dissolved for a certain time and then reconstituted. Anders Pettersson held therefore that the Council should not go back on its decision nor organize a vote of any kind on this point. At this stage in the discussion, the President proposed closing the debate. This motion was approved by a majority vote of the Council (21 for, 2 against).

Margaret Higonnet read the activity report of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages, which she chairs. She mentioned the recent meeting which was held in Lisbon in June 2011. She remarked on the good pace of work for many projects in progress, except for the ones on Lusophone Africa and on realism, which had to be suspended and will be reactivated with different research teams. Margaret Higonnet drew attention to the publication event honoring the History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe at the British Academy in December 2010, as well as the recent appearance of the third volume of Eva Kushner's project on the Renaissance and of a volume involving a comparative study of the Iberian Peninsula. To give a new dynamism to the projects in progress, the Committee plans to organize seminars at the annual conference of the American Comparative Literature Association in April 2012 and at the 2013 ICLA Congress in Paris. The committee had benefited from the financial support of the ICLA and of the International Academic Union. The committee requested a renewal of the ICLA's financial support, for an amount of \$3,000. As an addendum to the announcement concerning the Coordinating Committee's projected seminars at Paris in 2013, Lucia Boldrini remarked that the next conference of the British Association would be held right before the Paris Congress, in order to

allow even more foreign colleagues to attend. Margaret Higonnet's report and her request for a subsidy were unanimously approved.

William Spurlin presented the Gender Studies report. The Committee organized three workshops at the Seoul Congress and chose a new executive team. The Committee met again under the auspices of the 2011 American Comparative Literature Association conference in Vancouver. One session was organized there, with the title "The Gender and Sexual Politics of Translation." The committee had suggested on that occasion that it would be desirable to be able to organize annual meetings outside Europe and America. Two sub-committees had been constituted, one to set up conference programs, the other for research and its dissemination. The committee will meet again in 2012 at the American Comparative Literature Association conference. Among future publications, there are plans to publish articles selected from the session on translation at the Vancouver conference. The journal *Comparative Literature Studies* has shown interest in this publication. William Spurlin asked if the committee could request an ICLA subsidy for organizing conferences outside Europe and America. The President answered in the affirmative. The question will be considered at the Paris congress. William Spurlin's report was unanimously approved.

In the absence of Robert Stockhammer, Peter Hajdu read the report of the Literary Theory Committee. In 2010 the committee organized a workshop on literary theory and cosmopolitanism within the framework of the ICLA Congress at Seoul. In June/July 2011 the committee met in Munich, where a workshop on the sciences and literary theory had been organized. In 2012 the committee will meet in Richmond (Virginia, USA) for a workshop on the literary theme of the animal. In 2013 the committee will meet within the framework provided by the ICLA Congress in Paris, while in 2014 the committee plans to meet in Osaka. The committee's work in 2011 on literary theory and the sciences will be published in a special number of the journal *Neohelicon*. In addition, there are plans to publish the work of the 2009 and 2010 workshops on the notion of emotion in literary theory and on cosmopolitanism as books. Robert Stockhammer, the outgoing chair, will remain in that position until 31 March 2012. On 1 April 2012 John Zilcosky will succeed him. The report was unanimously approved.

Fourth session, 15 September 2011, 2:00 PM.

The ICLA President first gave a statement about the present situation of the Translation Committee. It was agreed at the Council's Seoul meeting to reform this committee by giving it a new chair. Sandra Bermann had been proposed for this post. The Council gave this decision its unanimous approval.

Hans-Joachim Backe then read a report about the activities of the Committee on Comparative Studies in the Digital Era. He mentioned the publication of some of the work presented at the Tel Aviv workshop in the journal *Revisto Texto General*. Two other publications are in the course of being realized, one comprising some work from the Tel Aviv workshop (*Poetics Today*), the other presenting some papers given at Seoul (*LLC: The Journal of Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*). The next meeting of the committee will be held at the University of Paris 8 in winter 2011–12. The report was unanimously approved.

Alfons Knauth presented his report dealing with the work of the Committee on Multilingualism in World Literature. The work presented at the Seoul Congress will be published by LIT-Verlag (Berlin) before the end of 2011 under the title of *Translation & Multilingual Literature – Traduction et littérature multilingue*. The committee will meet in December 2011 at the University of Macerata on the occasion of a symposium on the paradigms of multilingualism in world literature. Other meetings have been programmed for 2012 and 2013, at the University of California at San Diego and the University of Jadavpur in Calcutta respectively. The report was unanimously approved.

Cho Sung-Won set forth the final report for the Seoul congress. She mentioned that the task of editing the congress proceedings was taking place under excellent conditions. She foresaw that the proceedings would appear before the Paris Congress in July 2013. The Council gave Cho Sung-Won a warm hand of applause to express its gratitude for her efforts.

The President having invited announcements of miscellaneous publications, Isabel Capeloa Gil reported on the appearance under her direction of work presented at the congresses at Rio and at Seoul, respectively, in a special number of the *Journal of Romance Studies* and in a book titled *Fragility in Literature*, to appear with De Gruyter.

The President, Steven Sondrup, then made a statement to the members of the Council concerning various possibilities that had been presented for holding the 2012 meeting. The ICLA had received invitations from Beijing (Renmin University), from Bangkok (a proposal presented in detail by Inaga Shigemi), as well as from the Minister of Education of the United Arab Emirates for a meeting in the city of Abu Dhabi. Steven Sondrup will begin consultations with the aim of determining which of these proposals would best respond to ICLA's needs. He will also question Council members about the most suitable period for holding the meeting.

The Council meeting ended with a discussion of the ICLA's future. The President felt it was advisable to halt the loss of members that has been recorded the last few years. How could one make the ICLA's work more attractive, more especially to young colleagues? Hans Bertens felt that ICLA's work wasn't visible enough and that it would make sense to have annual conferences. Steven Sondrup emphasized that it was essential to promote the work of our research committees. Kathleen Komar thought that it would be advisable to consider an ICLA presence on Facebook or to create a forum for electronic discussion. William Spurlin felt that it would be enough to redefine the field of our discipline and to make the nature of our mission appear with greater clarity. Kathleen Komar insisted on the many-sided intellectual mission of the ICLA. Lucia Boldrini felt that it was necessary to look ahead to ensure a space for post-graduate students. Hans-Joachim

Backe put forward the idea of using Skype to disseminate the plenary talks at our congresses, which our young colleagues weren't always able to attend. Anne Tomiche felt that parts of our congresses could be filmed and later placed at the disposal of students. Without a doubt the congresses should arrange to have sessions reserved for post-graduate students. Zhang Longxi asked whether it would be possible to reestablish a comparative literature association at Hong Kong. John Burt Foster proposed that sessions be reserved for authors of first books, in the spirit of the Balakian Prize. Steven Sondrup suggested creating a committee to examine these various points. Three colleagues agreed to take part in it: Hans-Joachim Backe, William Spurlin, and Kathleen Komar. The Council unanimously approved the creation of this committee.

President Steven Sondrup closed the meeting of the ICLA Council at 4:00 PM after having thanked the colleagues for their joint labors.

Translated from the French and respectfully submitted by John Burt Foster.