

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
de l'Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée / of the International Comparative
Literature Association (hereafter the Association)

Members of the Association's Executive Council are known as Assessors

Catholic University of Portugal, Lisbon; 29-30 June 2015.

In attendance: Hans-Joachim Backe, Hans Bertens, Lucia Boldrini, Bernard Dieterle, Manfred Engel, Dorothy Figueira, John Burt Foster, Massimo Fusillo, Isabel Capeloa Gil, HASHIMOTO Yorimitsu, Peter Hajdu, Theo D'haen (on the morning of the June 30 session), Ute Heidmann, Achim Hölder, KAMIGAITO Ken'ichi, Kathleen Komar, Marc Maufort, Suzanne Nalbantian, ŌSHIMA Hitoshi, PARK Sowon, Anders Pettersson, Márcio Seligmann-Silva, Micaela Symington, William Spurlin, Anne Tomiche, YANG Huilin, ZHANG Longxi (at the June 29 session), and ZHOU Xiaoyi.

Unable to Attend: Christine Baron, Sandra Bermann, Lisa Block de Behar, CHO Sung-won, Wiebke Denecke, César Domínguez, Kitty Millet, Chandra Mohan, Jean-Marc Moura, E.V. Ramakrishnan, Haun Saussy, Monica Schmitz-Emans, Steven Sondrup, Monica Spiridon.

First Session: June 29, 9:30 am.

The Association's President, Hans Bertens, opened the session at 9:30 am. He thanked our host Isabel Capeloa Gil and the Catholic University of Portugal for inviting the Association's Executive Council to Lisbon, and for arranging lodgings, meeting facilities, and meals during the two-day business meeting. He also thanked her for organizing the subsequent two-day symposium on "Fear in/of Literature," at which several officers, assessors, and research committee chairs would be giving presentations. Isabel Capeloa Gil then welcomed the business meeting to Lisbon and to the Catholic University of Portugal and made several announcements concerning logistics, including arrangements for email. She reminded those in attendance of the banquet that evening at the historic Grémio Literary Club, with a welcoming reception from the Rector of the University, and of an excursion-visit the next afternoon to the Presidential Palace.

The minutes of the Council's two-day business meeting at Renmin University, Beijing, in September 2014, were approved unanimously. The agenda for this year's meeting was also approved, with several rearrangements in the order due to the travel plans or other commitments of the colleagues concerned.

President Hans Bertens then gave his report. After reminding the council of his ongoing efforts to initiate a research group on the literatures of the Islamic world, he expressed his gratitude for the efforts of many officers, assessors, and committee chairs over the past year. He was successful in getting the Association named as a Co-operating Institution with UNESCO's Memory of the World project. He also represented the Association at the Comparative Literature Association of India's biennial conference in Jaipur and made contact with a conference organization representing Halifax, Nova Scotia as a possible venue for the Association's 2019 Congress. In response to Achim Hölder, President Bertens explained that our co-operation with UNESCO did not entail any expenditures. Regarding the Halifax proposal, John Foster informed the meeting that no direct contact had yet been established with Dalhousie University, the local academic institution in Halifax. It had been agreed that sponsorship by some such entity should be a prerequisite, rather than just a promising option, in any negotiations over a Congress site.

The President's report was accepted by acclamation, with the President registering his abstention.

John Foster reported on his activities as the Association's senior secretary. In addition to preparing the minutes of the 2014 business meeting and working with the President to prepare the agenda for the 2015 business meeting, he gathered and distributed all the reports for the 2015 meeting. He also discussed the major logistical and clerical difficulties involved in gathering reliable membership lists from the Association's national affiliates and in keeping track of the major changes that sometimes occurred from year-to-year, for example with the American association. The meeting came to no satisfactory resolution of these problems. The secretary's report was accepted with a unanimous vote, with Foster abstaining.

Micéala Symington then gave her report as the French secretary. Since her schedule had kept her from attending the Beijing business meeting, she had composed the official French minutes on the basis of John Foster's English-language draft, with some input from the previous French secretary, Vice President Marc Maufort. Her report was accepted by the Executive Council.

The three treasurers reported on the current state of the Association's finances. Hans-Joachim Backe noted the good financial health both of the European and African treasury and of the Balakian Prize account for which he is also responsible. He mentioned his concerns about the African membership fees, close to half of which end up being absorbed in bank charges. The Asian treasurer KAMAGAITO Ken'ichi discussed the effect that falling exchange rates for the Japanese yen have had on his account. However, the increasing number of Chinese and Indian members did offset this situation to a certain extent. Kathleen Komar, the treasurer for the Americas, mentioned that the Argentine affiliate had paid its dues, along with the United States and Canada, but that neither Peru nor Brazil had answered her inquiries, though several Brazilian colleagues had taken out individual memberships. John Foster stated that the three treasurers' reports indicated that the Association had approximately \$230,000 in financial resources. In reply to President Bertens' question about the difficulty of arranging payment for individual memberships, given the way bank fees were levied, it was suggested that PayPal might be an option. The treasurers' three reports received a unanimous vote of acceptance.

Dorothy Figueira then gave her report as editor of *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research*. Given the termination of the University of Georgia's financial support, which was announced last November, as well as her four years of service as editor, she needs to turn that duty over to someone else. So far no successor has been named, and she is concerned about the future of the journal, which provides an essential service by giving all the members of our national affiliates a direct connection with the Association. In describing the journal's renewal and development over the past seven years, Figueira drew the meeting's attention to the challenges and the costs of distributing a publication to such a widely dispersed membership. Her report was accepted unanimously, with a standing ovation.

Discussion then turned to the future of the journal, and more specifically to the difficulty of developing a reliable list of the Association's members and their email addresses. Part of the problem could be attributed to our dependence on the lists maintained by the secretaries of our national affiliates, while another part of the problem lay with finding a replacement for Steven Sondrup's team of student assistants. Hans-Joachim Backe discussed the need for developing a more streamlined process of obtaining annual updates of the various national lists. Perhaps a new position should be created for an officer charged with maintaining the website and taking responsibility for creating and regularly updating the Association's master list. Discussion then turned to the clerical challenges associated with this task. After William Spurlin reiterated the

need for another officer, Hans Bertens responded that the Association could not afford the kind of clerical presence found, for example, with the American Comparative Literature Association. Even with 4000 paying members, our \$10 membership fee only provides a yearly income of \$40,000. We need to be cautious with our expenditures.

Hans Bertens continued by estimating that the annual costs of the journal amounted to \$15,000, with production accounting for \$11,000 and distribution for \$4,000. The University of Georgia had provided about \$6,000 of that money, and the Association about \$5,000 for a one-course buyout on the editor's behalf, and an additional \$4000 for postage. Given these expenses, how much can we pay someone to manage the membership lists? Micaela Symington raised the question of how much this job might be worth, given that it was currently being accomplished for free. Achim Hölter inquired about whether the job could be outsourced. If so, is there an average rate for this kind of work? Anders Pettersson pointed out that we don't have to decide this question here, but that we could ask the president to come up with a concrete proposal to be discussed in Vienna.

Hans Bertens suggested that the Association might allot a sum of \$6,000 per year for the editor of *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research*. John Foster reminded the meeting that at the time of his editorship of the journal the Association had an annual publication fund of \$9,000. Anders Pettersson suggested that members who wanted paper copies of the journal (in lieu of receiving a digital copy by email) should be charged a fee.

Following the coffee break, Hans Bertens proposed to allot \$5,000 per year to the incoming new editor of *RL/LR* for the next four years. The officers and assessors voted unanimously in favor of this proposal.

Hans Bertens then proposed that the journal go completely digital, with the exception of some paper copies that would be reserved for libraries. Massimo Fusillo suggested that this policy be placed before the General Assembly in Vienna. On a related issue of digital publication, Isabel Capeloa Gil inquired about the possibility of establishing a peer-reviewed open-access journal devoted to comparative research. Marc Maufort replied that the Association had traditionally limited its sponsorship to reviews of already published comparative research. With this mission in mind, Zhang Longxi raised the question of having a publisher's exhibition at the Vienna Congress.

Discussion concluded with a motion asking that the Association's officers communicate with each other over the coming year to find solutions for the problems that had been identified and discussed in this portion of the meeting. The motion was accepted with a unanimous vote.

Attention turned next to Steven Sondrup's report on the Bulletin and on the Association's website housed at Brigham Young University. In addition to routine matters involving the membership lists, the timely updating of the website, and plans for an electronic election of the officers and assessors, it was suggested, in the interest of better publicizing our research committees, that the website include links to the separate websites maintained by several of those committees. Research committees lacking websites might consider developing them. Steven Sondrup's report was unanimously accepted.

Over the past year the president had communicated via email with the Association's officers, assessors, and committee chairs about requests from various journals in our field to have a linked presence on the Association's website. Does the Association want to be formally involved with these journals, or should we simply list them? Ute Heidmann noted that it should be made clear that the Association has no responsibility for the content of these journals. It was decided that the President should send out a request to the assessors for their recommendations of journals to be

publicized on the website with the goal of providing links to these journals if possible, but to include a disclaimer of any responsibility for their contents.

In reporting progress in organizing the Vienna Congress, Achim Hölder mentioned that his team had already received 132 group proposals. Under certain circumstances it should still be possible for colleagues attending the business meeting to recommend or submit new paper proposals after the deadline set at the end of the summer. This report was approved with a unanimous vote. The meeting was then adjourned for lunch.

Second Session: June 29, 1:30 pm.

The afternoon session began with the report of the Congress Presentation Selection Committee (the Comité de Tri). Norbert Bachleitner has established a 6-member committee to evaluate conference proposals, to begin later in the summer, and asked for volunteers from colleagues at the business meeting. His report received a unanimous vote of approval.

Discussion then turned to whether the Association should hold its Congresses more often than at the three-year intervals specified in the Statutes. Despite the potential burden on academic travel budgets that could result from more frequent international and intercontinental meetings, this possibility could be kept open by introducing the following change in the wording: “usually every three years.” A motion to this effect was passed, with two abstentions.

In her report on the Balakian Prize, Monika Schmitz-Emans raised the question of whether a published dissertation counted as a first book for the purposes of the prize. Suzanne Nalbantian objected to this interpretation of the prize’s purpose, and Zhang Longxi agreed with her. The meeting unanimously rejected the proposed emendation of the language describing eligibility for the prize; “first book” remains the criterion, and not “either the dissertation or the first book.” The Balakian Prize report was unanimously accepted.

The agenda’s next item concerned Haun Saussy’s progress in organizing the Association’s new research initiative on East Asian literature, with the working title of “A Comparative History of East Asian Literatures.” After defining in broad outlines the nature of this project, Saussy reported in a message to the meeting that he had assembled a working committee of eight international scholars and asked for advice in enlarging the group. Anders Pettersson suggested adding the phrase “Inter-Asian Literary Relations” to the title. PARK So-won asked about the inclusion of Indian scholars in the project, and Zhang Longxi recommended that experts from China, Japan, Korea, and Japan should also be brought into the group in addition to scholars at Western universities. The officers and assessors voted unanimously to accept the report and noted with satisfaction Saussy’s desire to expand the list of experts.

The meeting then considered the report of the Structures Committee. Jean-Marc Moura reported in a message that the Association’s incorporation as an “Association étrangère” founded in 1956 and located in Paris was no longer valid. However, it would be quite easy to be registered at the Préfecture de Paris as an “Association loi de 1901,” this being the most frequent type of association in France. The business meeting voted unanimously to accept this proposal.

Moura’s report included a table outlining the nature and status of the Association’s four administrative committees, its one permanent research committee, and its eight committees on special problems (described as time-limited). This document led to a discussion of several issues involving the duration and powers of these committees. Anders Pettersson proposed adding a carefully formulated amendment to the Statutes so as to bring precision to these issues. Kathleen Komar objected to the classification of the Coordinating Committee as the only permanent committee. Further discussion indicated that both the Gender Committee and the Translation

Committee were meant to have a longer duration than the normal one of two triennial terms with the possibility of a one-term extension.

Regarding the powers of the committees, Isabel Capeloa Gil suggested that the Chairs of the Research Committees should be granted the right to vote at business meetings without having to be elected by some outside body. Kathleen Komar amended this proposal to state that the Research Committees should inform the General Assembly of the names of their Chairs at the time of the triennial elections so that they could be “ratified” as voters at Association business meetings. Hans-Joachim Backe noted that the names of two Administrative Committees, i.e. the Structures Committee and the Research Committee, did not reflect their actual functions in an ideally transparent manner.

President Hans Bertens intervened in this discussion by suggesting a three-way division of the committee structure, according to the following scheme: (1) the four Administrative Committees, (2) three Standing Research Committees (Coordinating, Gender, and Translation), and (3) the Ad Hoc Research Committees, whose mandate would be reviewed after two terms (six years). In the discussion that followed, it was pointed out that the Gender Studies Committee had already been given Standing Research Committee status at the 2014 meeting in Beijing. On the voting issue President Bertens accepted the ratification of Research Committee Chairs as voting members by the General Assembly as the appropriate compromise. He will contact the committee chairs about this innovation. He will also ask the Structures and the Research Committees to come up with new, more appropriate names.

The next topic of business focused on publications sponsored by the Association. Anne Tomiche reported on progress in selecting papers given at the 2013 Congress in Paris for publication in the Congress Proceedings. From more than 450 submissions, close to 200 texts will be published in a series of 5 to 6 volumes, to appear with Classiques Garnier. Anne Tomiche already disposed of a publication fund of 12,000 Euros, but she requested an additional 5,000 Euros from the Association with the aim of reducing the price of the volumes for individual purchasers. These volumes may be ready for display at the Vienna Congress, and Achim Hölder used this occasion to encourage his colleagues at the meeting to send their books to the exhibit he has planned. Discussion of Anne Tomiche’s report led to a motion asking her to negotiate further with Garnier, to inform the President of the results, and for him to inform the Executive Council and obtain its assent to any expenditures. Having settled on this plan of action, the meeting accepted Anne Tomiche’s report with a unanimous vote.

Jean Bessière’s report on progress in readying “Contextualizing World Literature” for publication (due to occur in Autumn 2015 with Peter Lang) received a unanimous vote of approval. This volume, which collected papers growing out of a seminar at the Paris Congress, had received a subvention from the Association.

The Research Committee, in a message from César Domínguez, reported on its approval of a new Ad Hoc Research Committee on “Comics Studies and Graphic Narrative,” to be led by Kai Mikkonen from Finland. The Committee’s request for an independent website or, better, a page of its own on the Association’s website, so as to better spread knowledge of its existence and activities, was left to President Bertens, who will contact César Domínguez. Lucia Boldrini will be consulted about her experience in setting up a website for the European Network for Comparative Literary Studies. Kathleen Komar added that César Domínguez should be asked to forward the full text of the Mikkonen proposal to the Executive Council for its approval, as required by the Statutes, and that in the future applicants should be informed that only the Executive Council gives final and official approval of these applications. In other words, the

Research Committee recommends and the Council makes the final decision on these applications. Discussion was followed by two votes, one that resulted in unanimous approval of the Committee's report and another that unanimously approved establishment of the new Ad Hoc Research Committee. John Foster voiced support for this decision by mentioning that the new committee brought together an interesting group of younger researchers who had been regularly organizing workshops since the 2004 Hong Kong Congress.

William Spurlin's report on the year's work of the Research Committee on Comparative Gender Studies reminded the meeting of that committee's status as a "permanent" or "standing" research committee. He then detailed a wide range of activities, initiatives, and publications, highlighted by a meeting in South Africa that had received some financial support from the Association. Spurlin's report received a unanimous vote of approval.

PARK Sowon reported on the activities of the Research Committee on Literary Theory, which featured a conference in Hungary and publication of the proceedings from an earlier conference in Japan. The report was accepted unanimously. As to the Committee's inquiry about a website presence, discussion elicited a request from Park for a subvention of 100 Euros. Hans-Joachim Backe and Lucia Boldrini inquired about why the Committee had not simply used WordPress or some other free website tool. However, further discussion led to a motion to allot a flat sum of 100 Euros per year to every Research Committee so that they could establish a web presence. This motion passed unanimously.

Hans-Joachim Backe's final report on the work of the Research Committee on Comparative Literature in the Digital Age summed up its many accomplishments over the nine years of its existence (two three-year terms plus one three-year extension). Despite disruptions in 2014 and 2015 due to financial and scheduling constraints, the committee members have planned a round-table on digital literature for the Vienna Congress to map out directions for future research. Hans-Joachim Backe's report was accepted with a unanimous vote.

Suzanne Nalbantian reported on the past year's work of the Research Committee on Literature and Neuroscience, whose focus on higher brain functions as understood by both scientists and scholars had recently shifted to creativity after previous explorations of memory and consciousness. The group's conference last fall has resulted in a book contract from Oxford University Press. Depending on the Lisbon symposium on "Fear in/of Literature" following the business meeting, Suzanne Nalbantian may decide to make emotion the topic of study in some future conference. After her report was accepted unanimously, the meeting adjourned for the day.

Third Session: June 30, 9:30 am.

The second morning session opened with consideration of Chandra Mohan's report on the Literary and Cultural Relationships between India, its Neighboring Countries, and the World. His message discussed the committee's conference activities and book publications, drawing special attention to its sponsoring the introduction of courses in Indian universities on the languages of neighboring countries. John Foster commented on this committee's activities in ensuring that comparative literature programs were established in various newly founded Indian universities. The Mohan report was accepted with a unanimous vote.

Looking ahead to next year's elections at the Vienna Congress, Theo D'haen gave the report of the Nominating Committee. In making its selections, the committee had aimed for both geographical diversity and gender balance, but was hampered by the many colleagues who turned out to be unavailable and could not serve. All the officers and assessors who were eligible

for re-election had been contacted. A lengthy discussion ensued that led to several changes in the list.

Because Helena Carvalhã Buescu had already served two terms as an Assessor and one term as European treasurer, she was not eligible for election as an assessor and needed to be removed from that candidacy. Because Mads Rosendahl Thomsen had accepted a candidacy for Assessor, he had agreed to step down from his position on the Nominating Committee, in accord with the Association's policy on not allowing members to hold two positions in the organization at the same time. Ipshta Chanda, from India, and Gisèle Sapireau, from France, had recently accepted to be nominated as Assessors and their names should be added to that list.

Kathy Komar pointed out, with some urgency, that several candidates belonged to national affiliates that had not paid their dues to the Association. President Hans Bertens replied that such candidates could not serve the Association in any capacity and should be encouraged to join as individual members if the situation with the national affiliate could not be resolved.

Isabel Capeloa Gil pointed out that among the 29 nominees presented by the committee only 8 were women. With regard to Mads Rosendahl Thomsen, she asked whether it was usual for a member of the Nominating Committee to nominate himself. Theo D'haen replied that Thomsen had been nominated by the Danish Comparative Literature Association. Anne Tomiche challenged the Sapireau nomination on the grounds that she was a sociologist, not a comparatist. Theo D'haen replied that he had approached her personally. On the need to remove Buescu from the list, John Foster suggested that she might replace Thomsen on the Nominations Committee. William Spurlin suggested, on the policy of encouraging diversity, that another criterion to have been used by the committee might have been interesting new approaches to comparative literary study. Theo D'haen reiterated his experience with the difficulty in approaching colleagues and finding possible candidates.

Concerning the issue of candidates who were not Association members or who were faced with unmanageable travel expenses, Lucia Boldrini wondered if the Association might offer subsidies in such situations, as was the case with some other scholarly organizations. Kathleen Komar answered that such an offer should only be made through a direct appeal to the membership. Hans-Joachim Backe added that some members had problems in even transferring money out of their countries. Miceala Symington praised the idea, but noted that our national affiliates pay the Association's treasurers directly, and the treasurers are not in a position to solicit membership dues from individuals.

Theo D'haen concluded the discussion by stating that from this time forward individual members could initiate nominations through the process stipulated in the Statutes, namely by supporting each nomination with seven messages of support from members in good standing. To Anne Tomiche's question about whether voting would start before the opening of the Vienna Congress, President Hans Bertens responded that voters would be all the members physically present at the Congress (unless electronic voting had been instituted by that time).

The officers and assessors then started voting on the selections of the Nominations Committee: (1) The nomination of Zhang Longxi of Hong Kong was unanimously approved, with one abstention. (2) The nominations of the four candidates for vice president, all of whom were men, led to a discussion of the need for some women nominees. Theo D'haen noted that given the situation with Helena Buescu, she could be nominated for one of the positions as vice president. Ute Heidmann proposed Lucia Boldrini, and Márcio Seligmann-Silva proposed Kathleen Komar, CHO Sung-won, Isabel Capeloa Gil, and Leonora Arfuch, from the Argentine affiliate. At this point Theo D'haen suggested that one woman candidate should be added to the

existing list of four candidates. President Hans Bertens stated that the meeting should vote on the current list and should authorize Theo D'haen to approach the new nominees to determine which ones were willing to serve.

(3) The two nominees for secretary, Anne Tomiche of France and João Cezar de Castro Rocha, received a unanimous vote of approval. (4) The three candidates for treasurer, Efraín Kristal from the United States and Peru, Hans-Joachim Backe from Germany and Denmark, and HIRAISHI Noriko from Japan (present at the meeting and introduced as a recent addition to the slate) were all accepted with a unanimous vote. (5) Approval of the list of candidates for assessor began with a vote on the eight incumbents eligible for a second term and willing to serve: Wiebke Dennecke, from the United States; Massimo Fusillo from Italy; HASHIMOTO Yorimitsu from Japan; Achim Hölter from Austria and Germany; OSHIMA Hitoshi from Japan; E.V. Ramakrishnan from India; Márcio Seligmann-Silva from Brazil; and YANG Huilin from China. This portion of the list was unanimously approved.

(6) When attention turned to the list of new candidates for assessor, KAMAGAITO Ken'ichi mentioned the Association's members in Singapore who might offer an added geographical dimension. He also suggested that there might be better qualified assessors from South Korea. Theo D'haen asked for more details on these points to be sent on to him. President Hans Bertens again reminded the meeting that it needed to vote on the list as presented by the Nominations Committee. The list was approved with two abstentions and with the understanding that the additions to the vice presidential list would be included.

Since Marcel Cornis-Pope was unable to travel for medical reasons, Theo D'haen gave his report on the year's activities of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages. Among the items mentioned were a business meeting and conference, several volumes in production, and no fewer than ten volumes in advanced stages of progress. The Committee requested a subvention of \$3,000 to cover production expenses, and the meeting approved this request. Theo D'haen must remain as acting chair of this committee until arrangements have been completed to elect Cornis-Pope's replacement, but since the Association forbids members from holding two offices at the same time, D'haen will do his best to expedite plans for the election. The committee's report was accepted with a unanimous vote.

The meeting then considered the report of the Research Committee on Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature, given by YANG Huilin. This group has pursued a research agenda for four or five years with the goal of integrating religious studies into comparative literary study. Its connection with the Association began at the Paris Congress, and in addition to several symposia and conferences last year, it has brought several publication projects to fruition including, notably, YANG Huilin's new book *China, Christianity, and the Question of Culture*, copies of which he presented to his colleagues at the business meeting. YANG Huilin foresees many new possibilities for research, and requested the meeting's advice on younger colleagues who might succeed him in chairing this committee. The meeting unanimously accepted the report and congratulated YANG Huilin on his new book.

Manfred Engel and Bernard Dieterle, the two chairs of the Research Committee on Dream Cultures – Cultural and Literary History of the Dream, reported on their group's activities. In addition to a program of conferences and publications, they have received funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for a Research Training Unit. The grant will support a group of graduate students for four and a half years, with a second term of similar length possible in 2019. This report was accepted with a unanimous vote.

In the absence of Kitty Millet, chair of the Research Committee on Religion, Literature, and

Ethics, John Foster presented her report. The Committee has received a book contract for its June 2014 conference, organized panels at the Comparative Literature Association of India's March 2015 conference, and has completed plans for a program at the Vienna Congress. The meeting gave its unanimous approval to this report.

The next topic on the agenda concerned possible venues for the 2017 Business Meeting and the 2019 Congress. There was some further discussion of the Halifax option, to be run by a professional conference firm, and John Foster also mentioned a second North American possibility in Cuernavaca, Mexico. President Hans Bertens then stated that he knew that China had a serious and concrete interest in hosting the 2019 Congress, and YANG Huilin confirmed that Beijing Normal University was definitely interested. John Foster wanted to make sure that it was understood, on the basis of the Association's prior experience in China, that an early September time for the Congress would conflict with many academic schedules around the world. The second half of July would have the best chance of being widely acceptable. The President asked YANG Huilin to contact his colleagues in China and to invite them to come to the Association's next business meeting just before the Vienna Congress to make a concrete proposal. This plan of action was given a unanimous vote of approval.

Since the 2017 meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association was going to be held in Utrecht in the second half of June, this venue might offer a good opportunity for the Association to meet in close conjunction with one of its national affiliates. The city is readily accessible from the Amsterdam airport, with its many connections worldwide, but this choice would result in a third European meeting after Vienna and Lisbon. Kathleen Komar mentioned that in 2018 the ACLA would meet in Los Angeles in March, which might allow for a North American venue. President Hans Bertens stated that he would explore the possibilities for a meeting in his home town of Utrecht for 2017.

The morning's final topic addressed the Association's Statutes and the broader question of the organization's future development. Isabel Capeloa Gil spoke to the issue of encouraging more involvement from graduate students, perhaps through a caucus or council or a Committee on Graduate Education. William Spurlin emphasized the feeling of detachment that prevailed among graduate students; specific structures would be needed if they were to be integrated into the Association with real success. He proposed setting aside a reception explicitly for graduate students at the Vienna Congress. Anne Tomiche agreed with these points, and suggested creating an administrative committee on graduate education, an idea supported by Massimo Fusillo. Achim Hölter also agreed with these ideas, but cited the difficulty posed by the Association's status as a "meta-organization." Students had a different attitude toward their national comparative literature associations. John Foster mentioned the possible relevance of a key point in the Research Committee's report, on taking a more proactive role in seeking out new directions for research, which could yield more participation by graduate students.

Discussion turned to the importance of instituting a "young researcher" event at the Vienna Congress. Isabel Capeloa Gil was appointed to set up a committee on which 2 or 3 younger researchers would serve along three or four senior scholars. Fusillo and Gil also voiced interest in establishing a research committee on intermediality, with a focus on literature and visuality.

Should there be regional conferences for graduate students sponsored by the Association, especially in Europe and Asia given the ACLA's dominance in North America? How much initial financial support would this initiative entail? These conferences would face competition from the numerous international summer schools that also appeal to this group. William Spurlin stressed the importance of nurturing younger researchers at the level of the national associations.

Should a committee be formed to compile a history of the Association? Mention was made of the documentation of the bylaws both for the Association as a whole and its research committees, done in 2004. Gerald Gillespie at Stanford has assembled a major archive, and John Foster has the last four years of minutes in his possession. The Association should also develop a concise Mission Statement to display on the website.

Achim Hölter announced that the Vienna congress will have an exhibit/display on the conference theme of the “many languages of Comparative Literature.” There are many discontinuities and contradictions in the vocabularies that scholars in our field use at different places in the world. The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

Fourth Session: June 30, 1:30 pm.

The meeting’s final session began with the report of the Translation Committee, which had been postponed in hopes that the chair Sandra Bermann, who had been delayed, would be able to attend. Responding to her report on developing the committee’s membership, on its conference activities, and on its publication projects, Micaela Symington praised its interesting and dynamic research agenda. John Foster reminded the meeting that Sandra Bermann had been charged with reconstituting a dormant committee concerned with issues central to comparative literary study, and that she basically had to start out from scratch. The report was accepted with a unanimous vote.

Discussion then returned to some themes broached in the morning session: the graduate committee to be chaired by Isabel Capeloa Gil; the issues surrounding the Association’s Statutes and bylaws, including easy access to them; and the possibility of assembling a history of the Association, with specific reference to Gerald Gillespie’s archives.

The possibility of formulating a concise mission statement for the Association evoked special interest. John Foster reminded the meeting of discussions of this issue at previous meetings, while Suzanne Nalbantian emphasized the importance of updating the description of comparative literary studies and making sure that our field was distinguished from cultural studies. President Hans Bertens agreed that this was an important issue, but noted that it would be difficult to arrive at a description with which all our colleagues would agree. John Foster pointed out that the editors’ introductions *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* might be a useful resource. Achim Hölter brought up his experience with the varying definitions of the field to be found in Wikipedia entries in 34 different languages. As a useful precedent, William Spurlin mentioned his experience in devising a mission statement for the Research Committee on Comparative Gender Studies.

Discussion then turned to whether the Website needed to be re-imagined. Should we continue to depend on a specific university connection, such as now exists with Brigham Young University? Is there a reliable professional solution? In any case, it should be easier than is presently the case to make changes and do updates to the website. In Hans-Joachim Backe’s considered opinion, the current website functions at a high technical level, whatever its other shortcomings might be. President Hans Bertens replied that we certainly needed to consider whether we wanted to keep the website at Brigham Young University. Achim Hölter urged the Association to shift away from any academic sponsor in favor of a professional service. The President suggested that Steven Sondrup and his team be given another six months and that if difficulties persisted we should examine other options. Hans-Joachim Backe and Lucia Boldrini both emphasized the need for a specific officer, or at least a responsible graduate student, who would be charged with running the website. Achim Hölter again insisted on the need for the high

level of reliability that one can expect with a paid-for service. The President then asked the Executive Council to approve the formation of a Website Committee, with himself, Hans-Joachim Backe, and Lucia Boldrini as members. Achim Hölter welcomed this initiative.

The meeting came to an end with Manfred Engel's suggestion that discussion at an earlier business meeting of establishing a searchable data-base listing the research interests of the Association's members could be extended to include all the conferees at its Congresses, provided that the registration process was organized in a suitable manner. The data-base might also be developed in such a way as to assist in establishing a more readily updated membership and contact list.

Respectfully submitted, on the basis of notes taken by Miceala Symington,

John Burt Foster, Jr.
English-language secretary.