

Annual Report 2010-11

Comparative Gender Studies Research Committee

International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA)

1. Meeting of ICLA in Seoul (2010)

At the annual meeting of the XIXth triennial ICLA Congress in August 2010, held in Seoul, the Comparative Gender Studies Committee organised a set of three workshops over two days on the topic 'Gender, Nature and Cultural Differences. Participants were from Brazil, UK, France, India, Korea, Mexico, New Caledonia, and the USA.

The Committee had its annual meeting at ICLA in Seoul. The following officers began their three-year terms from August 2010:

President

William J Spurlin
Brunel University, London (United Kingdom)
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Vice President

Sung Won Cho
Seoul Women's University (Korea)
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Secretary

Rita Terezinha Schmidt
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)
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Elected Executive Committee Member

Sergia Adamo
University of Trieste (Italy)
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Elected Executive Committee Member

Liedeke Plate
Radboud University Nijmegen (The Netherlands)
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Elected Executive Committee Member

Kate Rigby
Monash University (Australia)
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Elected Executive Committee Member

Michael Schuessler

Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Mexico)

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Past President

Margaret R Higonnet

University of Connecticut (United States)

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At the meeting, the Committee discussed where to meet in the years in between the triennial ICLA meetings. It was agreed that ACLA would be easiest, since it meets every year, but it was also noted that some participants might find it difficult to travel to North America every year, depending on where they are located. It was suggested that the locations of annual meetings be located in different parts of the world rather than only at ACLA.

It was agreed that in 2011 the Committee would meet at ACLA in Vancouver and propose a seminar for the ACLA programme in comparative gender and/or queer studies. Possible topics included 20th-century revolutions and sexual identities; translation as it relates to gender and sexuality; gender, sexuality, and migration; comparative studies of HIV/AIDS, comparative studies of transgender, and the gendering of comparative literary studies in the academy. The Committee voted for a session on translation for ACLA.

The Committee also discussed the development of a website to list its members, its activities at ICLA and ACLA, and its research publications and projects. With international participation, it could also be a site to help deconstruct Euroamerican notions of gender and sexuality as universalist; the site could also provide links to resources in feminist and queer studies worldwide, and provide an opportunity to share information through blogging. The Committee also thought that a website could provide a useful forum with which to become more activist about the increasingly uncertain status and future of comparative studies in the academy.

The Committee thanked Margaret R Higonnet for her years of service and hard work as its President from 2007-2010.

2. Meeting of ACLA in Vancouver (2011)

Based on the recommendation of the Committee at ICLA in Seoul, the Comparative Gender Studies Committee organised a session at ACLA in Vancouver in April 2011 on translation entitled 'The Gender and Sexual Politics of Translation: Literary, Historical, and Cultural Approaches.' This was just a single seminar with papers by Pierre Zoberman (Paris XIII); Elizabeth Richmond-Garza (University of Texas, Austin); Sandra Bermann (Princeton University), Michael Schuessler (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana); and William J Spurlin chaired. The session was well attended and there are plans to publish the papers as a special collection in a journal (see below).

The Comparative Gender Studies Committee also held its annual meeting at ACLA in Vancouver. The meeting was listed in the ACLA programme and over 25 people attended. Mair Rigby had volunteered to host next year's meeting at Monash University in Australia (for 2012) as part of a conference, but the funding fell through. The Committee suggested that we try to meet both at ACLA and in other parts of the world, where possible, so as not to privilege North America. The Committee agreed to hold its next annual meeting at ACLA at Brown University in 2012.

As a way of continuing its work, the Committee set up and voted on the following sub-Committees:

Program Sub Committee

This Sub Committee will plan and propose seminars for future ICLA and ACLA conference programs. Its Chair is to be elected from the members listed below:

Abdulhamit Arvas, Michigan State University (USA)
 Esra Arvas, Michigan State University (USA)
 Petra Dierkes-Thrun, Stanford University (USA)
 Jordana Greenblatt, York University (Canada)
 Mehammed Mack, Columbia University (USA)
 Pierre Zoberman, Université de Paris XIII (France)
 Tegan Zimmerman, University of Alberta (Canada)

The following topics, as works in progress, have been proposed and circulated for the 2012 ACLA conference to be held at Brown University, Providence, RI, USA:

- a) Gender, Sexuality, Pathology
- b) The East, The West, and Sex: Textual/Sexual Interactions in Early Modern Anglo/Muslim Encounters

The following topic has been proposed, as a work in progress, for the 2013 ICLA conference to be held in Paris:

- a) Gender and Language: Gendered (Self-)Presentation in Literature and Culture

Sub Committee on Research & Dissemination

This Sub Committee will locate suitable venues for publication and dissemination of work presented at the Committee's sponsored seminars at ICLA and ACLA. It will also work to promote research, funding, and publication for scholarship in comparative gender and sexuality studies more broadly through forming liaisons with funding agencies, journals, and publishers. It will take a proactive role in editing books and special issues of journals in the area of comparative gender studies.

Liedeke Plate, Radboud University Nijmegen (The Netherlands) Co-Chair
 Pierre Zoberman, Université de Paris XIII (France) Co-Chair

Petra Dierkes-Thrun, Stanford University (USA)
 Ashley Dryburgh, University of Alberta (Canada)
 Jordana Greenblatt, York University (Canada)
 Stephanie Hilger, University of Illinois, Urbana (USA)
 Richard House, University of Birmingham (UK)
 Saran Mahasupap, Chulalongkorn University (Thailand)
 William J Spurlin, Brunel University, London (UK)

3. Research, Publications, and Dissemination

The following work has been published over the last year under the auspices of the Committee; many of the papers collected in the collections and journals below began as ICLA papers and were developed for publication; additional papers were solicited through an open call:

Hayes, Jarrod, Margaret R Higonnet, and William J Spurlin, eds. *Comparatively Queer: Interrogating Identity across Time and Cultures*. New York: Palgrave, 2010.

Von Flotow, Luise, ed. *Translating Women*. Ottawa: U Ottawa Press, 2010.

Higonnet, Margaret R., ed. 'Gender in Literary History'. Special issue of *Comparative Critical Studies* 6.2 (Summer 2009).

Future projects include a proposed special issue of a journal on 'The Gender and Sexual Politics of Translation' coming out of the Committee-sponsored session at ACLA in Vancouver in 2011. The editor of *Comparative Literature Studies* has shown interest in seeing a proposal and TOC, and further essays are being solicited to make for a complete issue.

4. Budget and ICLA Support

The Committee has not had a budget, but would like to know what forms of support are available from ICLA to further its work, especially regarding support in organising a small conference at the universities of one of our officers to ensure that those who live far from North America can also attend Committee meetings and participate more fully in the Committee's activities in the years in which there is no ICLA conference.

The ACLA has given the Committee website space on its website, but the Committee would also like space on the ICLA site since it is an ICLA Committee.

Submitted to the ICLA Executive Council on 20 July 2011,

William J Spurlin
President