

ICLA Research Development Committee
Report to the Executive Council
14th June 2020

[NOTE added after the Executive Council's discussion: decisions by the Executive Council on items for discussion and decision have been added in CAPITAL LETTERS and BLUE FONT]

Membership of the Committee:

Prof Matthew Reynolds (Chair – Oxford University); Prof Sowon Park (Secretary – University of California, Santa Barbara); Baba Badji (Washington University in St Louis, Postgraduate Member); Prof. Rosinka Chaudhuri (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta); Prof. Anne Duprat (Université de Picardie Jules Verne); Prof. Toshiko Ellis (University of Tokyo) Prof. Alessandro Grilli (Università di Pisa); Prof. May Hawas (American University in Cairo); Prof. Paolo Horta (NYU Abu Dhabi); Prof. Marko Juvan (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences); Dr Eugenia Kelbert-Rudan (HSE University, Moscow, and University of East Anglia, Early Career Member); Prof. Tong King Lee (University of Hong Kong); Prof. Wen-Chin Ouyang (SOAS, University of London).

Report

1. Revision of By-Laws

The Executive Committee is asked to approve the proposed revisions to the By-Laws for Research Development Committee, Articles 1-8 and 11-13 (See Appendix A below). Articles 9 and 10 of the By-Laws need to be considered in the light of the issue of the budget which they provide for – see item 7 below. **[APPROVED]**

2. Description of the Function of Short-Term Research Committees and Standing Research Committees and Criteria for their Formation (both STRCs and SRCs) and renewal (STRCs only)

A central function of Research Development Committee consists in making recommendations to Executive Council regarding the formation and renewal of Short-Term Research Committees, and the formation of Standing Research Committees. However, there appear to be no extant criteria on which to base these recommendations; and without criteria it is obviously impossible for RDC to justify its decisions. We have therefore drafted descriptions of the functions of STRCs and STCs, and criteria for their formation and (in the case of STRCs) renewal (see Appendix B[i] and B[ii] below). The descriptions and criteria have been extrapolated from the relevant material available on the ICLA website, including the reports of existing research committees and the minutes of the Executive Council. **EC is asked to approve these descriptions and criteria.**
[APPROVED]

3. The Current Status of STRCs and SRCs

The ICLA's research committees are currently as follows:

Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies [founded 2011]

Renewal dates: (i) 2014; (ii) 2017; ends 2020

Literature and Neuroscience [founded 2012]

Renewal dates: (i) should have been 2015; (ii) should have been 2018; ends 2021

Religion, Ethics and Literature [founded 2014]

Renewal dates: (i) 2017; (ii) 2020; ends 2023

Comics Studies and Graphic Narrative [founded 2016]

Renewal dates: (i) should have been 2019; (ii) 2022; ends 2025.

Literature, Arts & Media [founded 2018]

Renewal dates: (i) 2021; (ii) 2024; ends 2027

Comparative African Literatures [founded 2019]

Renewal dates: (i) 2022; (ii) 2025; ends 2028

Literary History

Website states: 'the establishment of this Committee was approved in 2018. Information will follow soon'

Past Short-Term Research Committee

Dream Cultures: Cultural and Literary History of the Dream (2013–2019)

Standing Research Committees (report directly to EC so not under the purview of RDC)

The Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages Series (CHLEL) [founded 1967]

The Research Committee on Literary Theory [founded 1985]

The Comparative Gender Studies Research Committee [founded 2004]

The ICLA Standing Research Committee on South Asian Literatures and Cultures [founded 2016]. It continues the work of the former, time-limited Research Committee on Literary and Cultural Interrelationships Between India, Its Neighboring Countries and the World [2011]

Translation Studies [founded 2012]

Comparative History of East Asian Literatures [founded 2014]

The committee on Literature and Neuroscience was meant to have had its first renewal in 2015 as stated above, but in fact this happened in 2016; it was then meant to have had a second renewal in 2018 but this never took place. **RDC proposes to regularise the situation of this committee by taking it that the 2018 renewal took place *de facto*, so that the committee can continue in operation for the moment, with its nine-year limit being reached in 2021. [APPROVED]**

RDC notes with some concern the time-lag between EC's approval of the committee on Literary History and the beginning of any activity.

Renewals that should have taken place last year, but did not, are being dealt with this year – see item 4 below.

4. Renewal of Short-Term Research Committees

As indicated above, two committees are due for renewal:

(i) Comic Studies and Graphic Narratives (first renewal)

RDC recommends that this committee be renewed for a second three-year term.

[APPROVED] RDC welcomed the energetic work done by this committee in its opening phase. However, we noted the lack of any explicit plans for further publications, and of any concrete measures to support ECRs and doctoral students, and we recommend that both should be in place if a further renewal is requested in three years' time.

The renewal form submitted by this committee can be found in appendix C.

(ii) Religion, Ethics and Literature (second renewal)

RDC recommends that this committee be renewed for a third three-year term.

[APPROVED] RDC admired this committee's strong research trajectory, the diversity of its membership, the explicit welcome it extends to postgraduate students, and the resourcefulness with which it has adapted to the circumstances of the pandemic.

The renewal form submitted by this committee can be found in appendix D.

5. Formation of a new Standing Research Committee

The Short-Term Research Committee on Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies has reached its 9-year time-limit, and has applied to be re-constituted as a Standing Research Committee.

RDC discussed this application in some detail. We noted the very active research profile of this committee, and were impressed by the quality of the work it has produced. However, we did feel some unease about its range. Despite the broad remit announced in the committee's name, we noted that the majority of its work has been on Christianity and the Chinese pre-Qin tradition, and we thought it strange that Sanskrit does not appear to have featured in any of the committee's discussions. It seemed to us that a Standing Research Committee should (as suggested in the new criteria) have a more substantial remit than a Short-Term Committee. We noted that one event included discussion of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Assyrian, and Egyptian cultures, and we felt that this sort of broad scope was to be encouraged. While the committee does provide some support for early career academics and postgraduate students, it is not clear whether any early career academics are included in the membership of the committee itself: we think it advisable that they should be. We also wondered whether there might be potential for collaboration between this committee and the committee on Religion, Ethics and Literature. In conclusion **RDC recommends that EC gives provisional approval to the re-constitution of this committee as a**

Standing Research Committee, subject to the receipt of plans for the development of a broader comparative scope for its work, and clarification of the role of early career academics in its governance procedures. The approval should then be confirmed (or withdrawn) at the next EC meeting in January 2021. [APPROVED]

The request form submitted by this committee can be found in appendix D.

6. Dissemination of Research

RDC applauds the open publication of *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research*. However, we also note that, while ICLA research committees have for years been publishing a large amount of important and exciting work, it is not always easy for members of the ICLA to access these books and articles. For instance, the latest volume in the *Comparative History of European Literatures* series is priced at €190 / \$285 and will not be affordable for many libraries, let alone ICLA members.

RDC recognises that there are costs associated with open-access publication, and that the issues around it are complex: it is therefore unlikely to be practicable for ICLA to insist on open-access publication of all the research that it supports quite yet. There are however intermediate steps that could be taken:

- i. Could the ICLA support *some* open-access publication, to expand on the excellent example set by *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research*?
- ii. Might steps be taken to enable ICLA members to access ICLA research without the full cost of open-access publication being incurred? For instance, *Comparative History of European Literatures* is published by John Benjamins which has a digital platform: could the CHEL committee negotiate with John Benjamins for ICLA members to be given electronic access to these volumes at a preferential rate? Or could the ICLA itself create a repository for pre-publication versions of ICLA-supported books and articles that could be accessed by its members?
- iii. In the longer term, might it be possible for the ICLA to move towards establishing its own public-oriented publication platform?

RDC therefore recommends that the Executive Council adopt the principle of encouraging its research committees to disseminate their research as widely as possible to ICLA members, including the use of open-access publication where possible. [APPROVED] This principle is embodied in the requirement for research committees to describe how they are disseminating the results of their research in the criteria given under item 2 above. Its possible financial consequences are addressed below (item 7).

7. Financial Support for Research [HELD OVER FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT EC MEETING]

RDC notes that the Executive Council has on occasion made financial contributions to the work of research committees. For instance, it supports *Comparative History of European Literatures* at a rate of €2000 per volume; in 2016 the Research Committee on Gender Studies was granted €2000 for a conference; and EC 2015 minutes record a decision to

allocate €100 to every research committee to 'establish a web presence', though it is not clear if this has in fact been acted upon. **RDC recommends that EC establish a policy on financial support for research, such that all research committees are aware of it and have an equal chance to apply.** As RDC sees it, there are four things to be decided:

- A. Should ICLA offer financial support to its research committees? **RDC recommends that it should, in line with the precedents mentioned above.**
- B. What should the budget be? **RDC recommends that a figure of €10,000pa in total (i.e. to cover all research committees) would be appropriate.** We recognise that the present times are financially challenging (as well as challenging in other ways) for many institutions and individuals, but we have no information on the current financial situation of the ICLA. We offer this figure as one that seems to us potentially both manageable for the ICLA and helpful to its members.
3. Should the budget be controlled by RDC (as envisaged in the original RDC By-Laws) or by the Executive Council (as seems to have been the recent practice)? **If EC continues to control the budget then Articles 9 and 10 of RDC's By-Laws should be deleted.**
- C. What should be the application procedure for financial support? **RDC recommends that the following words be added to the descriptions of Research Committees given under item 2 above (this wording assumes that applications will be made to EC but it is of course easy to change if EC makes a different decision).**

For Short-Term Research Committees:

It is expected that short-term research committees will be largely self-financing. However, a committee may apply to the Executive Council for help with the costs of open-access publication; and, *during its initial three-year term only*, it may apply for help with other research costs up to a total of €1000 (that is, a total of €1000 for the three-year term, not each year). Any such applications should be made in advance of the expenditure as part of the committee's annual report to the Executive Council, and should be supported by a detailed justification of the costs.

For Standing Research Committees:

It is expected that standing research committees will be largely self-financing. However, a committee may apply to the Executive Council for help with the costs of open-access publication; and it may apply for help with other research costs up to a total of €1000 in any three-year period. Any such applications should be made in advance of the expenditure as part of the committee's annual report to the Executive Council, and should be supported by a detailed justification of the costs.

8. Publicising the ICLA's support for research

Once decisions have been taken about items 2, 6 and 7 above, RDC proposes to place in the ICLA Newsletter an announcement inviting applications to form new research committees, to make sure that all ICLA members are aware of this important opportunity that the ICLA offers them. Applications will be considered annually, in the run-up to the EC meeting. We will especially encourage applications that address key research questions in

comparative literature today and/or help fill gaps in the areas covered by existing committees, such as: digital humanities, race and ethnicity studies, cultural and social studies, geocriticism and ecocriticism, and postcolonial and world literature studies.

Appendix A: Revised By-Laws for research Development Committee

ICLA Committee on Research

By-Laws

Preamble

During the meeting of the Executive Council (Bureau) of the ICLA in New Delhi on 24-26 February 1990, the function and procedures of the Committee on Research Development (see ICLA Bulletin XI, no. 2 of 1991, p. 43) have been set forth. The Committee of Research Development (hereafter "the Committee") is an administrative committee established for the purpose of advising the Executive Council on the wide variety of current and prospective research initiatives which ICLA strives to encourage (Article VII of the Statutes of the ICLA).

Article 1

The Committee aims to examine proposals for research projects under the aegis of the ICLA, monitors activity of existing research projects sponsored or recognized by the Association, and investigates ways to stimulate and support research efforts of special relevance to the work of the Association. It also considers inquiries from interested parties seeking collaborative encouragement, recognition, or support for research projects. In accordance with the Statutes of the ICLA (Article I), it attempts to realize this objective through international cooperation.

Article 2

The Committee is responsible to the Executive Council of the ICLA and will annually submit a formal account of its activities before the meeting of the Executive Council. The Chairperson of the Committee is entitled to attend the meetings of the Executive Council of the ICLA as an observer.

Article 3

The membership of the Committee shall be re-constituted after every election. It is composed of a Chair, a Secretary and a limited number of members. The membership, including the officers, should reflect a broad geographical and cultural representation, and should include at least one Early Career Representative and at least one Postgraduate Representative.

Article 4

The Committee's Chair is designated by the ICLA President and approved by the Executive Council. The other members of the Committee are appointed by the Chair in consultation with the President of ICLA.

Article 5

Members of the Committee are appointed for three years, and can be re-appointed for another term of three years.

Article 6

The Chair of the Committee may invite non-members to attend a Committee meeting.

Article 7

The Committee usually conducts its business by email circulation. It meets whenever necessary and in any case just prior to the General Assembly at the international congresses of the ICLA.

Article 8

When the Committee is conducting its business by email, votes are decided by a simple majority. In physical meetings, votes are decided by the simple majority of members present. The quorum consists of half of the committee membership, present or represented, plus one. A Committee member unable to attend a meeting may designate another member or any qualified person as a proxy provided that the Secretary and the Chairperson receive a written notification of such proxy before the meeting.

Article 9

The Chair and Secretary of the Committee, and the Treasurer of the ICLA, are jointly responsible for finances. They establish the budget which must be approved by the Committee and ratified by the Executive Council. They propose to the Committee applications for grants and their uses. They audit and approve the financial reports from those who received the funds granted. The Committee is free to receive subventions from private, regional, national or international organizations provided that the acceptance of such subventions does not conflict with the statutes of the ICLA and is approved by the Executive Council.

[COMMENT: At present, Research Development Committee has no budget. The Executive Council should decide whether to ascribe a budget to RDC, to be used for the support of research committees, or whether to handle financial requests from research committees itself (as appears to have been the case in recent years). See item 7 in RDC's report to EC.]

Article 10

Available funds are deposited in one of the ICLA accounts kept by the Treasurer of the ICLA. If the Treasurer is not a member of the Committee, he/she will attend the meetings as a non-voting member. The Treasurer will report to the Committee at least once a year.

[See comment on Article 9]

Article 11

The activities of the Committee shall comprise: making recommendations to the Executive Council regarding the formation and renewal of Short-Term Research Committees; making recommendations to the Executive Council regarding the formation of Standing Research Committees; and all other activities which further the objective of the Committee as described in Article 1. Members are expected to participate in the activities of the Committee in the following ways:

- Participation in meetings of the Committee by email circulation, normally at least once a year.
- Attending physical meetings of the committee where possible. Physical meetings usually happen only at the triennial ICLA Convention.
- Members are encouraged (though not required) to participate in the work of any of the ICLA's Research Committees that interest them.

Article 12

The Executive Council of the ICLA has the right to dissolve the Committee.

Article 13

A motion to change these by-laws must be voted on according to the provisions of Article 8. Any change in the by-laws must be approved by the Executive Council of the ICLA.

Appendix B[i]

ICLA Short-Term Research Committees

1. Description

A short-term research committee addresses a research question that can be effectively treated in a 3-year period. If the progress of the work justifies it, a short-term research committee may be renewed for a further three years, and then (exceptionally) for a third and final three-year term. Once the nine-year limit has been reached, a short-term research committee must cease its work. It may however seek to be reconstituted as a standing research committee.

Typically, an application to form a short-term research committee will come from a group of 6 or more academics. It is expected that at least one third of this founding group will be early-career academics, and that the committee's plans will include provision for involving postgraduate students in its work. If you are considering applying to form a short-term research committee, and wish to draw more people into the project, you are welcome to place an announcement in the ICLA newsletter. A short-term research committee should have a constitution making clear how the Chair and any other officers are elected, and how ICLA members can apply to join. The committee will need to submit an annual report on its activities to the ICLA Executive Council. If it wishes to seek renewal at the end of a three-year term, it must apply to Research Development Committee.

A short-term research committee may pursue its research through a variety of means, including physical workshops, conferences and seminars, sessions at the ICLA triennial convention, and online fora for discussion and collaboration. The committee should have strategies in place for enabling members who are not able to attend physical meetings to participate in its work. The committee should also have a plan for disseminating the results of its research as openly as possible to ICLA members and the wider academic community: this might include the use of a website and social media. The ICLA strongly encourages its research committees to embrace open-access publication

To support its short-term research committees, the ICLA offers: publicity via its website and newsletter; the ability to reach the world-wide community of ICLA members; bespoke sessions at its triennial conventions; advice from Research Development Committee and the Executive Council when required; the prestige of association with the ICLA.

2. Criteria for assessing an application to form a short-term research committee

- i. Does the application define a research question that can be effectively treated in a 3-year period? Is the question sufficiently important to justify the formation of an ICLA short-term research committee?
- ii. Is the composition of the research team appropriate? Are at least one third of its members early-career academics? Is there provision for involving postgraduate students in the committee's work?
- iii. Is there a convincing plan of research, including projected outcomes and timeline?

- iv. Is there a satisfactory constitution for the committee, including processes for electing the Chair and any other officers, and for members of the ICLA to join?
- v. Are there strategies in place for enabling members to participate in the work of the committee if they are unable to travel to physical meetings?
- vi. Is there a plan for disseminating the results of the committee's research as openly as possible to ICLA members and the wider academic community, including open-access publication where appropriate?

3. Criteria for assessing triennial renewal of a short-term research committee

- i. Has the committee completed an adequate programme of work during its expiring three-year term, including satisfactory outcomes?
- ii. Are the proposals for the requested new three-year term convincing, including projected outcomes and timeline?
- iii. Is there a satisfactory constitution for the committee, including processes for electing the Chair and any other officers, and for members of the ICLA to join the committee?
- iv. Are there strategies in place for enabling members to participate in the work of the committee if they are unable to travel to physical meetings?
- v. Is there a plan for disseminating the results of the committee's research as openly as possible to ICLA members and the wider academic community, including open-access publication where appropriate?

Appendix B [ii]

ICLA Standing Research Committees

1. Description

Standing research committees concern themselves with substantial research areas of ongoing importance (examples from among the current standing committees are 'Literary Theory' and 'Translation'). A standing committee may be formed *ex nihilo*, or by conversion from a short-term research committee. In either case, application is made to Research Development Committee. After a standing research committee has been established, it reports annually to the Executive Council.

Typically, an application to form, or convert to, a standing research committee will come from a group of 12 or more academics. It is expected that at least one third of this founding group will be early-career academics, and that the committee's plans will include provision for involving postgraduate students in its work. A standing research committee should have a constitution making clear how the Chair and any other officers are elected, and how ICLA members can apply to join.

A standing research committee may pursue its research through a variety of means, including physical workshops, conferences and seminars, sessions at the ICLA triennial convention, and online fora for discussion and collaboration. A standing research committee should aim to have a key role in its area of the discipline: it might, for instance, establish connections with related ventures, give recognition to outstanding work, or offer periodic accounts of the state of the field or new developments within it. The committee should have strategies in place for enabling members who are not able to attend physical meetings to participate in its work. The committee should also have a plan for disseminating the results of its research as openly as possible to ICLA members and the wider academic community: this might include the use of a website and social media. The ICLA strongly encourages its research committees to embrace open-access publication where possible.

To support its standing research committees, the ICLA offers: publicity via its website and newsletter; the ability to reach the world-wide community of ICLA members; bespoke sessions at its triennial conventions; advice from Research Development Committee and the Executive Council when required; the prestige of association with the ICLA.

2. Criteria for assessing an application to form a standing research committee

- i. [a] Does the application address a substantial research area of ongoing significance, one that is likely to generate a series of research questions?
- ii. [b] If the application is to convert from a short-term committee to a standing committee, does the short-term committee's record give confidence that conversation to a standing committee is justified?
- iii. Is the composition of the research team appropriate? Are at least one third of its members early-career academics? Is there provision for involving postgraduate students in the committee's work?

- iv. Is there a compelling plan of research for the first three years, including projected outcomes and timeline? Is there a convincing prospect that new research questions will arise in later years?
- v. Is there a satisfactory constitution for the committee, including processes for electing the Chair and any other officers, and for members of the ICLA to join?
 - v. Are there strategies in place for enabling members to participate in the work of the committee if they are unable to travel to physical meetings?
- vi. Is there a plan for disseminating the results of the committee's research as openly as possible to ICLA members and the wider academic community, including the use of open-access publication where appropriate?

Appendix C: Renewal request from the Research Committee on Comic Studies and Graphic Narratives

ICLA Research Committee Triennial Renewal Request Research Committee on Comic Studies and Graphic Narratives

1. Please give a brief account of your committee's activities in the past year

Members of the research committee have presented in various panels on embodiment at the American Comparative Literature Association annual meetings in seminars by Lisa DeTora 2019 (Georgetown University). Two seminar streams were co-sponsored. Barbara Grüning, Lisa DeTora, and Carl Fisher presented in both 2018 and 2019.

Lisa DeTora and Angelo Piepoli organized a seminar at the 8th Congress of the European Society of Comparative Literature, Lille 26-30 August 2019.

Angelo Piepoli, Lisa DeTora, and Umberto Rossi edited the GNR essays for the DeGruyter ICLA Proceedings volume. Ten papers were included by the following GNR members: Alison Halsall, Angelo Piepoli, Anna-Sophie Jürgens, Barbara Grüning, Denise Ask Nunes, Francesco-Alessio Ursini, Kai Mikkonen, Lisa DeTora, Nicola Paladin, Noriko Hiraishi, Stefan Buchenberger, Umberto Rossi

Francesco Ursini continues his trajectory of useful publishing with the following entry: Ursini, F.-A. (2019) Punk Bodies and the "Do It Yourself" Philosophy. In Chris Field, Keegan Lannon, Michael David McBride, Christopher C. Douglas (eds.). *I am just a comic book boy: Essays on the intersection of comics books and punk.* 205-222. MacFarland Press.

At the 2019 AILC/ICLA meeting at the University of Macau a panel was organized by Noriko Hiraishi, Stefan Buchenberger and Lea Pao. Title of the panel: Know Thine Enemy. Antagonistic Dynamics in Graphic Narratives. All together five papers were presented.

Lisa DeTora, working with Jodi Cressman of Dominican University in the US, had a volume on Graphic Embodiment accepted to University of Leuven Press (forthcoming 2021, with a contributions Barbara Grüning, Alison Halsall and Carl Fisher). Lisa also has papers appearing in the forthcoming Routledge guide to gender and sexuality in comics studies (Ed Frederick Aldama, forthcoming 2020), a volume on critical approaches to comics (U Mississippi Press, ed. Thom Giddens, forthcoming 2020), and a volume on Fear and Safety based on the ENCLS 2017 meeting (Tampere University Press, forthcoming 2020).

Current Membership: Adnan Mahmutovic, Alison Halsall, Angelo Piepoli, Anna-Sophie Jürgens, Barbara Grüning, Carl Fisher, David Coughlan, Denise Ask Nunes, Emanuela Zirzotti, Francesco-Alessio Ursini, Guilherme Perreira, HansJoachim Backe, Hiroko Katsuyama, Kai Mikkonen, Lea Pao, Leonardo Vidal, Lisa DeTora, Maaheen Ahmed, Nicola Paladin, Noriko Hiraishi, Rikke Platz Cortsen, Roberta Bronzatto, Stefan Buchenberger, Tracy Lassiter, Umberto Rossi, Micaela Manansala, Takayuki Murakami-Yokota

2. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of your committee's work since its inception?

Since its inception, our committee's membership has grown continually and its members continue to be involved in different research activities within the ICLA, the ACLA or the ESCL as well as other meetings. A number of publications have also appeared (see yearly reports).

For future activities please see below.

3. Please give a brief account of your committee's plans for the coming three-year period

Our Committee will co-organize and co-present the international conference on "Visual Depictions of the American West" at the Ca' Foscari University in Venice in 2021

It will also present a panel at the ESCL at the Sapienza University of Rome in September 2021

For the ICLA congress in 2022 preparations for a panel are already underway and we hope to attract many scholars from around the world.

4. Please outline your committee's governance procedures, including any processes for electing the Chair and other officers and for admitting new members to the committee

New members can join the Committee by presenting a paper at any panel or workshop organised by the Committee at the ICLA or at other comparative literature conferences, like the ACLA or ESCL.

We have formed a facebook group for membership and other participants.

Governance comprises three co-chairs (S Buchenberger, K Mikkonen, T.Lassiter), the organizing committee for the ICLA conference, and the secretary. Members propose research activities by sending a call for proposals to the membership and posting on the Facebook page. Chairs and officers are solicited among volunteers and an open discussion and voting process has been used.

5. Does your committee provide any opportunities for early career fellows and postgraduate students?

Early career fellows and postgraduate students are and have always been welcomed to join. We are proud to say that some members have started their academic careers by joining our committee.

6. Do you have any arrangements in place to enable ICLA members to participate in or benefit from the work of your committee if they are unable to travel to physical

meetings? Can you envisage initiating or extending such arrangements in the coming years?

The calls for papers for the ICLA and other conferences have been open to everybody and have resulted in acquiring new members at the conference. Many non-members of the committee participate in the Facebook community and therefore have access to calls for papers and opportunities to publish.

We also do outreach via our Facebook community and with cross-posting to related communities. Contributions to publications by members include both conference presentations and related work.

As physical meetings are becoming more difficult, virtual meetings will have to be considered in the future.

Appendix D: Renewal request from the Research Committee on Religion, Ethics and Literature

ICLA Research Committee Triennial Renewal Request

Religion, Ethics and Literature

1. Please give a brief account of your committee's activities in the past year

(It is fine for this to duplicate your annual report for the Executive Committee)

2019-20: ICLA Congress, sponsored panels; ACLA co-sponsored seminar with Gender committee.

The pandemic has halted a lot of our normal activities. We were scheduled for a joint seminar with the Gender committee at ACLA, but these had to be cancelled. I'm now putting together a zoom conference for my members who were prevented from giving their papers. Since my committee numbers about 79 (?) members at the moment, I'll open up the attendance to include them as well.

2. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of your committee's work since its inception?

(Research Development Committee will be able to see previous annual reports so please confine yourself to the headlines here)

Publication opportunities and conference appearances for early career researchers, and faculty from regions where academic travel is not regularly supported.

3. Please give a brief account of your committee's plans for the coming three-year period

1-2 zoom conferences for committee members a year. We're such a global committee with a large cohort of graduate students and independent scholars that it's really impossible for many members to attend small conferences put on by the committee. Even the tenured faculty who would like to host a conference are not prepared for the expenses associated with such an event so since the pandemic has made everyone available on zoom or ms teams, I've decided to add at least one zoom conference per year.

4. Please outline your committee's governance procedures, including any processes for electing the Chair and other officers and for admitting new members to the committee

We elect the president every 3 years. I have been reelected twice since the committee's inception in 2014. At the time of the committee's inception, there were no plans to have committee officers since we were just beginning and there wasn't really a need. We now have a vice president, John Hawley (Santa Clara University, full professor); Dr. Zainab Mahmood (New School, NYC adjunct professor), Katie Lally (UC Santa Cruz, doctoral student). The committee ceded to me by vote after Vienna's ICLA Congress, the power to appoint officers when and if officers were necessary.

5. Does your committee provide any opportunities for early career fellows and postgraduate students?

Opportunities for early career and post-grads seem to be the majority of our outreach. For example, fifty percent of the collection, *Fault Lines of Modernity*, included early career fellows, independent scholars, and adjuncts. Our ACLA seminars, ICLA panels, routinely comprise at least 40% post-graduates and grad students.

6. Do you have any arrangements in place to enable ICLA members to participate in or benefit from the work of your committee if they are unable to travel to physical meetings? Can you envisage initiating or extending such arrangements in the coming years?

The reality of the pandemic has made this a reality. We are now endeavouring to move some conferencing to the zoom platform exclusively.

Appendix E: Application from the Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature committee to be re-constituted as a Standing Research Committee

Template for Request to Convert from a Short-Term Research Committee to a Standing Research Committee

Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature

1. Please give a brief account of your committee's activities in the past year.

From September 2018 to January 2020, the Research Committee on "Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature" has been promoting and fostering the spirit of comparative studies, with a special focus on Scriptural Reasoning, which we believe is unique in promoting inter-disciplinary studies, by sponsoring the following academic events:

1) International Conferences:

- September 26-29, 2018, SR committee helped the Fifth Nishan Forum, whose theme was "A Changing World and A Shared Future for All Humanity," to run a "Roundtable for Intercultural Philosophy." We invited Professor David Ford at Cambridge University, one of the two founders of "Scriptural Reasoning" movement, Professor Nicholas Adams from Birmingham University, another active promoter of SR in UK, and Professor Alexander Lomanov from Russian Academy of Social Sciences, to dialogue with three Chinese scholars. The two SR research committee scholars later gave lectures at universities in Beijing and organized a "Scriptural Reasoning" practice. These events caught attention of many who are interested in the interdisciplinary studies and expanded the research fields of comparative literature studies.
- October 8-9, 2018, SR committee worked with scholars in the field of Chinese ancient textual studies to organize a conference on the theme of "Studying Pre-Qin Masters in the New Era." Professor Yoav Ariel at the University of Tel Aviv spent twenty years translating the full text of an ancient Chinese work *The Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Yan*, which was finished in 2017 and published by Renmin University of China Press in 2018. This conference organized scholars of similar interest at home and abroad to honor Professor Ariel's hard work, celebrate the publication of the book and explore further on the methodology and new issues in this area.
- November 2nd, 2018, SR committee helped run the fourth "Confucius China Studies Program" PhD Forum. Out of more than 50 applicants, we chose 12 to present their papers at the forum. CCSP is a scholarship sponsoring international PhD students in the area of humanities and social sciences to study in China as an exchange students or full-time students. These students' research topics are related to China. The Forum provides a platform for these students to exchange and learn from each other while they are in China.
- November 3-4, 2018, SR committee helped run the Sixth World Conference on Sinology, whose theme was "Understanding China: Inclusive Sinologies and

Diverse Civilizations.” 50 overseas scholars and 50 Chinese scholars attended the conference. This biennial conference provides an open academic platform for scholars of different fields to dialogue and learn from each other. The metaphor used at this conference is “stone”. We each come from different cultures, and after our gathering at the event, we are taking home a stone of another culture as a memory. The spirit of SR committee is to enhance each other by mutual learning and mutual reflections, which is embodied in the sinology conference.

- April 11-13, 2019, SR committee helped the International Center for the Study of Ancient Text Cultures to run the annual international conference, whose theme was “The King’s Speech: The Royal Voice in Antiquity”. 16 scholars from overseas and mainland Chinese high institutions presented papers. Ancient cultures in discussion include Chinese, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Assyrian, and Egyptian cultures.
- July 20-21, 2019, SR committee worked with the Department of Archaeology and Museum Studies at the School of History and the Department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge University on an international conference of “Theorizing (IM)Materiality of Cultural Heritage in China.” This is the first international conference on this topic in China. Scholars hoped to find a voice for the Chinese way of preserving and passing over cultural heritage by discussing the practices of Chinese government and Chinese people.
- November 2-4, 2019, SR committee, together with the Confucius Institute at Dusseldorf, organized the Executive Council Meeting of World Conference on Sinology and a China Study Program PhD Forum at Dusseldorf. About twenty young scholars presented their papers in front of the established sinologists. We offered an effective platform for the early career scholars in the field of sinology and China studies.
- In January and June of 2019, SR committee has helped run two international workshops for young scholars in ancient textual comparative studies. This workshop runs biannually since 2017, and each time four distinguished scholars will be invited to give lectures on ancient classical studies and ancient civilizations, and 40 junior faculty members and PhD students will be invited to participate with their own research proposals. So far SR Research Committee has helped run three workshops with different themes: “Manuscripts and Materiality” (Jan. 5-12, 2019) and “Author and Authority in Ancient World” (June 17-21, 2019). This is another way to practice and live out the spirit of Scriptural Reasoning because each one is forced to compare their own research with similar research interest from other civilizations. The spirit of being open-minded and inclusive is encouraged in such workshops.

2) Lectures:

In the past year, SR Research Committee has invited many scholars to lecture at RUC. The spirit of SR committee (mutual learning and mutual reflection) can be seen clearly from their topics listed here:

- May 24, 2018, Professor ZHANG Longxi (Hong Kong City University), “Another Intellectual Choice of Modern Chinese Scholars: A Case Study of Qin Zhongshu.”

- September 27-28, 2018, Professor David Ford (Cambridge University), two lectures on “Scriptural Reasoning”: “Scriptural Reasoning: A Journey of Surprises;” “Scriptural Reasoning: Its Educational Promise.” In addition to lectures, Professor Ford did a practice of Scriptural Reasoning under the title of “SR: Teachers and Learners.” All participants are invited to read a paragraph of similar meaning from the *Book of John* 1:35-39, *Koran* 18: 66-67, *Dirghagama-sutra* vol. 3, T. 1. 001. 16c8-12, *Analects* “Shu Er” 7:22-25. In each reading, there was one representative from each tradition to introduce the background and context of the reading, and then all participants were encouraged to share their insights of reading the text. The practice was an eye-opening experience to many students who were present.
- October 11, 2018, Dr. Alexander Chow (Edinburgh University Divinity School), “Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies.”
- October 15-18, 2018, Professor Jenny Mander (Cambridge University), “Why the World Needs Good Stories?”
- October 23, 2018, Dr. Hong Liang (China Graduate School of Theology), “The Typology Studies of Late 19th Century and Early 20th Century German Scholars’ Reading of Dostoyevsky.”
- January 7-11, 2019, Professor Imre Galambos (Cambridge University), four lectures on “Medieval Chinese Manuscript Culture.”
- March 7, 2019, Professor Ola Sigurdson, “A Turn to Marxism Studies in Terry Eagleton and Slavoj Zizek.”
- May 22, 2019, Professor Susannah Brietz Monta (Notre Dame University), “Psalms and English Poetry.”
- May 31, 2019, Professor Stephen J. Patterson (Willamette University), “The Lost Way: Early Christian Wisdom Literature.”
- October 31, 2019, Professor Tiziana Lippiello (Cafoscari University of Venice), “The Ambivalence of *Tianwen*: an Accommodation Formula.”
- November 21-22, 2019 Professor Martin Kern (Princeton University), “*Zuozhuan* and Its Studies in the English World.”
- January 6-13, 2020, Professor Paul Kroll (Colorado University Boulder), “Fresh Perspectives on Tang Literature.”
- January 10 & 13, 2020, Professor Xiaofei Tian (Harvard University), “Chinese Modern Literature: Research Methods.”

3) Publication:

SR Research Committee oversaw the edition and publication of issues 40 (theme: Religious Phenomenology) and 41 (theme: Mit dem Anfang anfangen) of the *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture*. The project related to *T’oung Pao*, one of the leading academic journals on sinology worldwide, is undergoing well. The purpose of the latter project is to find the good translators of different languages and present some good-quality research materials for Chinese scholars so that the

Chinese scholars in the area of humanities may find some inspirations after reading the “scriptural reasoning” activities in these foreigners’ writings about China.

2. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of your committee’s work since its inception?

The most important aspects of our committee are: 1) Contributing to the promotion of the inherent spirit of comparative literature in the studies of ancient texts. Scholars in the area of philosophy, philology, classics, sinology, arts, religious studies, etc., have found it inspiring when talking to comparatists in SR committee. 2) Have broadened the traditionally restricted scope with Chinese resources. The interdisciplinary studies on ancient Chinese texts have brought in dialogues with other ancient civilizations. 3) Have deepened the intercultural, inter-lingual and interdisciplinary dimensions of comparative literature; 4) Have fostered the early career scholars in China and the world by hosting academic activities under cross-disciplinary topics.

For detailed explanation of these aspects, please see the vision and mission of SR Research Committee:

Since the 1990s, comparative readings of Judaic, Christian, and Islamic scriptures have attracted more and more attentions. The so-called “Scriptural Reasoning” unfolded by such comparative readings has become a very important inter-disciplinary field of Religious Studies and Comparative Literature. Although originally “Scriptural Reasoning” focused more on the Judaic, Christian, and Islamic scriptures, namely the Abrahamic tradition, growing attention has been focused upon comparative studies between these scriptures and Chinese Classics. Researchers and scholars gradually have agreed that the Chinese Classics as well as the commentaries on these Classics translated by Western missionaries constitute abundant resources of “Scriptural Reasoning”, and such resources will naturally help the discipline become genuinely intercultural, inter-lingual and inter-disciplinary comparative studies.

Early missionaries such as Joachim Bouvet, Robert Morrison, Richard Wilhelm and James Legge not only endeavored to translate the Bible into Chinese but also translated and introduced a great deal of Chinese Classics to the West. These missionaries translated almost all of the critical Chinese ancient classics. Their interpretation and commentaries based on their own backgrounds and contexts opened a great space for dialogue between China and the West. Thus, scholars from China, North America and Europe in the field of the Religious Studies and Comparative Literature have established a research website, doing research through international cooperation and inter-disciplinary collaboration. Scholars from different backgrounds believe that when the different but shared scriptures or classics are comparatively read alongside one another, we may find ourselves being confronted with a boundary-crossing “liturgy,” in which the presence of Truth might be identified in varied ways, and we may not only gain a better understanding of the others but also potentially gain a better understanding of our own scripture and tradition

It is for this reason that we are proposing that the International Comparative Literature Association establish a Committee of “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies”. It is our hope that with this committee we can further expand the research scope of the International Comparative Literature Association and fully develop the potential power of

Comparative Literature as an inter-cultural, inter-lingual and inter-disciplinary research field. Through reading, comparing, and “reasoning” together with other disciplines and cultural traditions, Comparative Literature research may avoid its self-isolation, self-interpretation or “pre-assurance”, and the inspiration and enlightenment inside this discipline might be exposed as its essential mark. As a result, the interaction and inter-relationship between theoretical research and textual studies could be greatly strengthened and mutually enriched.

3. A Standing Research Committee is not time-limited. Please explain the need for your committee to continue its work indefinitely.

As the only research committee initiated and organized by Chinese scholars, SR committee has been actively promoting comparative studies in China, helping young scholars meet established scholars in the world. It is also a good platform to have international scholars participate into the activities held by the Committee. Since its inception, SR committee has built a good network and connecting with scholars in the world whose research areas are extending to a wider horizon. As presented in the activities we have held in the past year, our network covers the areas of classical studies, philology, philosophy, ancient Chinese studies, modern Chinese literature, comparative religious studies, etc. What is more, in the past nine years, SR committee has been based in Renmin University of China, and now with Professor Zhang Hui as the new chair, SR committee is able to extend its impact to Peking University. The committee will be able to run more activities and have more scholars join the committee's work.

4. What are your committee's research plans for the next three years?

In the next three years, we hope to run the following activities:

- 1) Host at least one panel and one Roundtable at the Triennial Congress of Chinese Comparative Literature Association.
- 2) Host several international conferences for comparatists in China and other parts of the world, such as the biennial World Conference on Sinology (<http://hantui.ruc.edu.cn>); biannual workshops on comparative antiquity studies for young scholars and PhD students; symposium on translation of Chinese modern literature in European languages, etc.
- 3) Organize a group of young scholars to translate and publish the book series - “Literature and Intellectual History” (with the Commercial Press).
- 4) Support early career scholars to publish their dissertations, fostering “Chinese Comparative Literature Library” (with Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press).
- 5) Invite key scholars in the field of comparative literature and world literature to lecture at Peking University and Renmin University of China.
- 6) Host PhD students' forums for Chinese and International students in Chinese universities.

5. Please outline your committee's governance procedures, including any processes for electing the Chair and other officers and for admitting new members to the committee.

The Committee is governed by the Chair and the Secretary. Members of the Committee can send proposals to the Chair if they want to run a workshop or seminar. The Chair is recommended by the previous Chair. Current members can recommend one or two new members. The Committee is open for new members.

Governance Office:

ZHANG Hui, Peking University, Chair

ZHANG Jing (Cathy), Renmin University of China, Secretary

Members:

David Ford, Cambridge University, member

GENG Youzhuang, Renmin University of China, member

Andrew Hass, Stirling University, member

John LAI, Chinese University of Hong Kong, member

LI Bingquan, Renmin University of China, member

LIU Yunhua, Shanghai Normal University, member

David Jasper, Glasgow University, member

David Jeffrey, Baylor University, member

Peter Ochs, Virginia University, member

Chloé Starr, Yale University, member

WANG HAI, Renmin University of China, member

YANG Huilin, Renmin University of China, Member

ZHANG Hua, Beijing Language and Culture University, member

ZHANG Longxi, Hong Kong City University, member

Eric Ziolkowski, Lafayette College, member

6. What opportunities does your committee provide for early career academics and postgraduate students?

- 1) Every year we run at least two workshops or seminars for these scholars. Through these gatherings, we select talented scholars and help them apply for publishing fund.
- 2) Help international young scholars apply for Chinese fund so that they may do research or field work in China.

7. Do you have any arrangements in place to enable ICLA members to participate in or benefit from the work of your committee if they are unable to travel to physical

meetings? Can you envisage initiating or extending such arrangements in the coming years?

Yes, we do and we can. In fact, because of the restrictions of the pandemic, all universities are used to teaching online courses. Zoom, Cloud lectures or seminars are becoming new ways of exchange ideas. We will explore the chances and methods to include early career scholars and PhD students into our meetings or teaching programs. The committee aims to be a good platform for academic exchange with the support of this technology.