

# Minutes of the AILC-ICLA Executive Council meeting

19-21 June 2023

Online (Zoom)

## Day 1, 19 June 2023, 3-5pm CEST

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lucia Boldrini, Adelaide Russo, Anne Duprat, Anne Tomiche, Chandra Mohan, EV Ramakrishnan, Fatiha Taib, Haun Saussy, Helga Mitterbauer, Ipshita Chanda, Isabel Gómez, Kitty Millet, Liedeke Plate, Lobna Ismail, Marc Maufort, Márcio Seligmann-Silva, Marina Grishakova, Marko Juvan, Matthew Reynolds, Massimo Fusillo, Noriko Hiraishi, Oana Fotache, Rita Terezinha Schmidt, Robert Young, Sandra Bermann, Sayantan Dasgupta, Tracy Lassiter, Stefan Helgesson, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Toshiko Ellis, Umberto Rossi (invited), Youngmin Kim, Yuriko Yamanaka, Zhang Hui.

The President welcomed everyone, in particular the new EC members attending for the first time:

- Prof EV Ramakrishnan, Chair of Balakian Prize Committee;
- Prof Stefan Helgesson, Chair of Nominating Committee;
- Prof Liedeke Plate, Chair of Structures Committee;
- Prof Chengzhou HE, Chair of Standing Research Committee on Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature;
- Prof Meg Arenberg, Co-Chair with Brahim El Guabli of the Research Committee on Comparative African Literatures;
- Profs Jørgen Bruhn and Kiene Brillenburg Wurth, new Co-Chairs of CLAM.

The President said that the Agenda had been organised to reflect time constraints of those who have items for discussion and thanked everyone for attending when they could. She apologised for the late distribution of reports and documents for discussion and thanked the members for reading the reports and voting at short notice and the Secretaries for their work on collecting and distributing papers, and collecting votes and comments.

## 2a) Composition of the EC and voting rights.

The President reminded EC members of the composition of the EC and who has voting rights.

- Elected members of the Council (10 officers and the Executive Committee of 18 elected members) can all vote.
- Chairs of Standing Research Committees (hereafter SRC) also have the vote as they were ratified by the General Assembly (hereafter GA). This was added to the Statutes in 2016 following a discussion about voting rights for Chairs of Research Committees.

The last paragraph of Article VII now reads as follows:

“The chairs of all committees and the editor of the Association’s official journal are invited to attend meetings of the Council and to take part in its discussions. The chairs of the Standing Research Committees have the additional right to vote on all issues that come

before the Council, except for their own reports, on the condition that the General Assembly has ratified their position as chair.”

No-one can vote on their own reports.

The President then outlined the issue for discussion: Chairs of SRCs were ratified at the last GA in 2022 *with their names*, and not as generic chairs. This fulfils the Statutes’ condition that the GA has ratified their position as chair of a SRC. However, chairs can change in between GAs, leaving the new chair (and the SRC) with no vote. This is the case at present for the Committee on Scriptural Reason and Comparative Literature: Hui Zhang was ratified as chair, but the new chair is Chengzhou He. If we interpret our Statutes literally and narrowly, not having being ratified as chair, Chengzhou does not meet the condition set by the statutes. On the other hand, leaving the SRC without a voice in the EC (while the other SRCs have a vote and a voice), appears unjust and against the spirit in which the extension of the vote to chairs of SRCs was sought some years ago.

The President wanted to consult the EC on a possible solution: can the EC agree that an outgoing chair can delegate a new chair to vote in the EC (except on the report of their own SRC)? (Moreover, according to the same principle, when there is more than one chair for a SRC, can the ratified chair delegate one of the other chairs to represent the SRC, including in votes?)

Whatever decision the EC reaches now, the Structures Committee should be asked to consider the matter and propose a way forward (which may include amending Statutes). The Structures Committee could report to the EC in 2024 and the General Assembly can vote on the proposed solution in 2025.

Discussion followed. The main problem was pointed out by Anne Tomiche: “delegation” implies that the original ratified chair remains in place and can withdraw the delegation to the new chair. The President agreed that the proposed wording caused difficulties and that better wording should be found, for re-discussion either later in these EC meetings if possible, or in the future. [New wording was proposed in day 2 of the meeting and a vote was taken; see below, 20 June 2023, item 0]

## **2b) Approval of reports of administrative and research committees**

The Secretaries had collated votes and all reports were approved either unanimously or by large majorities. A small number of comments were made. Typos, names or dates, and other small matters will be communicated to the authors of the reports with a request to amend them before the reports are uploaded to the website.

Two more substantial issues had been noted in comments on the reports.

Firstly, the report by the SRC on Scriptural Reasoning appears to include material extraneous to the focus and scope of that committee, for example activities of the Chinese CLA or more generally of comparative literature in China that do not appear to related to Scriptural Reasoning. The President invited comments from Hui Zhang (author and outgoing chair), Chengzhou He (new chair), or any member present; no comments were made. The President reiterated that the report had already been approved, but invited the Chair of the SRC to note these comments for the future.

Secondly, there was a factual correction and an update to the CLAM report. The Vice-Chair of the committee, Marina Grishakova explained that a summer school at Pau has been listed as future activity, but the colleague in charge of organising it cannot commit to it at present (this is the update). The correction is that CLAM doesn't participate *as a committee* in CHLEL's work towards a volume on the Baroque; rather, some members of CLAM do so in their own capacity. Helga Mitterbauer, Chair of CHLEL, corroborated that only a few members of CLAM participated in the CHLEL meeting on the Baroque at the last ICLA congress in Tbilisi.

As changes have been made after the report had been approved, a new vote was necessary. The amendments were approved, with no opposition.

### **3. Nominating Committee: Approval of By-Laws**

The President explained that the by-laws of the Nominating Committee (NC hereafter) were drafted and discussed in 2021 (or even 2020), and that although all its principles (esp. multiple candidates for each position) were agreed and implemented for the 2022 election, some amendments had been proposed but the by-laws were never brought back to the EC for formal approval. The Committee Chair, Stefan Helgesson, was invited to present these and any other amendment he wanted to propose. He explained that some typos or small similar matters had been silently corrected in the current draft, and that he would outline the more substantial ones.

The current draft of the by-laws included the principle of having 2 candidates for every position, and for him the question was whether this should excluded the position of President. For that important position, one would need two candidates with equal commitment to ICLA, the discipline, and its future, and who would be willing to contest knowing that it would be all or nothing. This may make it hard to secure a double nomination for the position of President, and in any case the person who loses has no formal role to play in the Association, so we risk losing someone with commitment and vision. The changes suggested were as follows:

#### *Article 2*

CURRENT DRAFT: 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 Chair of the Committee is a member of the Executive Council *ex officio*.

PROPOSAL TO CLARIFY THE LATTER SENTENCE AS FOLLOWS: The Chair of the Committee is a **non-voting member** of the Executive Council *ex officio*.

#### *Article 6*

CURRENT DRAFT: The Nominating Committee shall make every effort to present at least two candidates for each position, including the President.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE ARTICLE AS FOLLOWS: The Nominating Committee shall make every effort to present at least two candidates for each position, **excluding the President**.

#### *Article 10*

CURRENT DRAFT: The EC validates the final list by majority vote. This validation will take place at the second annual EC meeting of the triennium. Any member of the EC wishing to propose a further addition to the Committee's list at this time should be prepared to share a CV for the new person and shall have secured, in advance, that person's agreement to appear on the list. The list of candidates,

as approved by the EC, each with a brief bio-bibliographical summary, will be published in the *ICLA Newsletter* and on the website as soon as possible after this second annual meeting.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE LAST SENTENCE AS FOLLOWS: ... will be [announced through the Association's normal means of communication with the membership, such as the Website, the Newsletter, and email communications](#).

#### *Article 11*

CURRENT DRAFT: Any member in good standing may submit the names of additional candidates to one of the Secretaries. Each such nomination from the membership must be made in writing, must be accompanied by a petition with the signatures of at least seven members in good standing, and must be received by the secretaries at least two months prior to a triennial congress.

PROPOSAL TO CLARIFY THE FIRST SENTENCE AS FOLLOWS: [In addition to the list approved by the Nominating Committee](#), any member in good standing may submit the names of additional candidates to one of the Secretaries. Each such nomination from the membership must be made in writing, must be accompanied by a petition with the signatures of at least seven members in good standing, and must be received by the secretaries at least two months prior to a triennial congress.

A vote was taken after a brief discussion.

Result of vote : Yes to changes: 27; No: 0; Abstain: 0

The by-laws are approved in the amended form, and will be published on the website.

## **4. Congress 2025**

Youngmin Kim's detailed report on the 2025 Seoul Congress had been approved. The President pointed out that there was an important change in the venue – the hosting university is now Dongguk University and no longer HUFs.

She reported on the recent meeting of the Program Committee (PC) to discuss this change and the Congress themes. She thanked Youngmin for including the changes so quickly after the PC meeting and also for the generous offer to EC members for 2 nights' hospitality and for putting together a very rich social and cultural programme. She then handed over to Youngmin, who made a detailed presentation with the change of venue and other specific details included since the presentation to the EC in 2022.

Marko Juvan suggested that the theme of "technology" in the Congress title requires more sub-themes, like usage of distant reading and digital reading of literary corpora. Adelaide Russo suggested use of data and artificial intelligence. Youngmin Kim requested that any suggestions be emailed to him, to be considered by the Advisory and Organising Committee.

The title of the 2025 Congress was discussed; it was suggested that "technology" is now generally taken to mean digital and that "technologies" (plural) may be more suggestive of other technologies, including older (invention of printing, of writing). Youngmin Kim added that technology was also progressing unpredictably with many breakthroughs – so the change to the plural was relevant. Matthew Reynolds emphasised that we should treat technology both as theme and structural principle of literature. Some however thought that the singular was clearer and inclusive. The Advisory and Organising Committee will decide.

Questions were asked on the variety, availability and cost of accommodation, including for students. Youngmin Kim pointed out that it was too early to block-book, but available accommodation was plentiful, outside and on campus, and would be confirmed in 2024.

Dongguk University would ensure the convenience of participants. A decision also needed to be taken regarding the exact level of subsidised registration fees for students.

Oana Fotache pointed out that 2025 would be the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the ICLA. Youngmin Kim asked the President to send a few sentences highlighting the historical importance of the 2025 conference, which can be used to support requests for funding.

## **5. EC meeting 2024, Delhi, India, in conjunction with the 2024 CLAI conference**

The President said that the annual meeting of the EC has not usually been in the agenda for discussion and approval, but welcomed the detailed proposal by Chandra Mohan and his colleagues (E.V. Ramakrishnan, Ipshita Chanda, Sayantan Dasgupta), as EC members and as officers of CLAI, with Professor Amitava Chakraborty (Chair of the Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies of the University of Delhi), for the EC meeting to be held in India in 2024, along with the 2024 CLAI conference. She thanked them for this proposal and commended the excellent topic: “Comparative Literature as Alternative Humanities: Ethics, Affect and the Everyday Social”. She then invited Chandra Mohan to make a brief presentation.

Chandra Mohan said that the venue of the meeting and the CLAI 2024 conference would be the University of Delhi, which was celebrating its centenary year. The Arts Faculty of Delhi University, which would co-host the events, was also planning the opening of a new Centre for Comparative Literature. He outlined the plans for accommodation of EC members and the venue. The organisers were willing to let the EC members decide on the exact dates; June-July, September, or November were equally acceptable to the organisers. This was put to an indicative vote to assess preferences; the results were largely in favour of September, and in particular for early September.

Yuriko Yamanaka brought up the question whether delaying the EC of 2024 to September would be too late for planning for Korea 2025. The President said consultation with colleagues from CLAI and with Youngmin Kim and his Congress organising team in Korea would take place to come to a consensus.

## **6. Other meetings and conferences, and Congress 2028**

The President thanked Oana Fotache, who had also made an initial offer to host the EC in Romania and has planned to discuss a renewed offer for the EC meeting in 2026. This would mean that the EC has a (possibly unprecedented) run of three years of in-person meetings already planned.

Many other conferences of national associations are being planned, but one is especially important to mention: a conference organised by our Moroccan colleagues and Fatiha Taib in particular, on “Sixty Years of Comparative Literature in the Moroccan University – From Comparative Literary Studies to Comparative Cultural Studies” at Rabat, Morocco, 16-18 April 2024. The President informed that Morocco has two associations of comparative literature, the MCLA, which joined the ICLA last year and the CCLMC (Coordination of Researchers on Maghrebian and Comparative Literatures), which is in discussion with ICLA to join, thanks to Fatiha Taib. She thanked Fatiha and noted that this conference would be an occasion to celebrate the solid presence of the Maghreb in the ICLA.

The Congress Hosting Guide had been revised – with thanks to Marko Juvan, Anne Tomiche and Irma Ratiani – and bids for 2028 could open soon.

## **Day 2, Tuesday 20 June, 3-5 PM CEST**

Members present: Lucia Boldrini, Alexandra Lopes, Adelaide Russo, Anne Duprat, Anne Tomiche, Chandra Mohan, Fatiha Taib, Haun Saussy, Helga Mitterbauer, Ipshita Chanda, Irma Ratiani, Isabel Gómez, Kitty Millet, Marc Maufort, Marko Juvan, Márcio Seligmann-Silva, Massimo Fusillo, Matthew Reynolds, Lobna Ismail, Marina Grishakova, Noriko Hiraishi, Oana Fotache, Rita Terezinha Schmidt, Robert Young, Sandra Bermann, Stefan Buchenberger, Sayantan Dasgupta, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Toshiko Ellis, Youngmin Kim-

Before moving to the official agenda, the President returned to the question about votes for chairs of SRC not ratified by name by the GA, when there is a change of chair between GAs; and secondly, in the case of co-chairs when the ratified chair cannot be present. While she fully accepted the legal thin ice of using the word “delegate”, pointed out the previous day by Anne Tomiche, she reiterated her concern that a literal interpretation of the Statutes seem to go against spirit of the amendment introduced in 2016. This also undermined the rights of committees whose members elected a chair in the understanding that they would be represented fully on the EC. The President therefore proposed the following phrasing for consideration:

“When there is a change of Chair of a Standing Research Committee, the outgoing Chair transfers to the new Chair the responsibility and right to represent the Standing Research Committee in the Executive Council.”

For co-chairs, when the ratified chair is not able to attend, the problem with the notion of delegation should not apply. A ratified Chair who is unable to attend could therefore – if the EC agrees – *delegate* to another co-chair the representation of the SRC, as long as they communicate this *before* the meeting to the Chair of the EC (ie the President) or the Secretaries. This could be stated thus:

“The ratified Chair of a Standing Research Committees who is unable to attend an Executive Council meeting may delegate to another elected Co-Chair the representation of the Standing Research Committee, as long as they communicate the delegation to the Chair or Secretary of the Executive Council in advance of the meeting.”

(Example of proforma for delegation: “I, NAME, Chair of XXX SRC, being unable to attend the EC meeting on DATE, delegate my Co-Chair XXX to represent the XXX SRC in my absence”.)

The President then invited comments. Haun Saussy proposed that these changes be accepted, Anne Duprat seconded.

Vote: approved 19, Abstain 0, Against 0.

### **2.1. Brief update on Communication (website, membership list, mailing list, links with associations)**

The President reported that work in these areas has not gone as smoothly or speedily as it should have done, for the reasons outlined in her report. The appointment of an

administrator (next item on agenda) should help us get back on track. She reported on the current status:

**Website:** very basic updates happening, done either by Lucia Boldrini or by Audrey Deveault (the former ICLA assistant employed for purpose of assisting via Lucia Boldrini's institution, now employed by Lucia Boldrini directly). The EC in its meeting last year agreed we develop a new website. The new administrator should help us achieve this by helping select web developers and liaising with them.

**Email:** Most of the emails we receive at the moment are from students who ask to become members (for free); Audrey is responding to these and adds them to the members list, and Lucia Boldrini deals with the more substantial emails. Again, the Administrator should help respond more swiftly.

**Individual members:** at the moment c. 400 individual members. Most are student members who register for free via website. Individual paying members – through the credit card facility managed by Adelaide Russo, Treasurer for the Americas, via Louisiana State University – mostly registered in the run up of the Congress last year and now need to be contacted to ask to renew as their membership expires.

**Memberships of National Associations:** renewals are mostly on schedule, some need to be chased; the main complications is the European Treasurer's inability to access the account (to be discussed tomorrow). The President hoped that over the summer a comprehensive update of the membership list can be done. This will enable updating of the mailing list and resumption of the **Newsletter**, at least as basic one (until we have an administrator), with the help of a team of colleagues from the EC consisting of: Marina Grishakova, coordinating, as well as and Fatiha Taib and Sayantan Dasgupta, who also kindly offered to help last year.

She also shared some good news regarding ICLA being contacted by several people from different countries, from Lithuania to Algeria to Vietnam to Nepal to Indonesia etc. – in addition to the CCLMC (Coordination of researchers on Maghrebian and Comparative Literatures) mentioned yesterday – to discuss setting up new associations or groups that can affiliate to the ICLA. She then asked Haun Saussy and Toshiko Ellis, chairs of the Committee on Affiliated and Associated Organizations, to update us on other friendly associations and any possible collaborations.

Haun Saussy said that he had sent out letters of invitation to likely associations requesting them to think about working together with ICLA. In the case of a few associations, the request landed between leadership changes, so results are yet awaited. The Sahitya Akademi, the Indian academy of letters, indicated that it cannot participate in international projects as their mandate is only national. However, the International Research Centre (IRC) of the India International Centre (IIC), Delhi, has shown considerable interest and collaboration looks promising.

Toshiko Ellis asked about the role of the CAAO in liaising with the various people who had approached the ICLA about forms of affiliation. This will depend on the type of group; some wish to establish formal national associations, which should become Member Associations; others may be new informal groups; and others still may be already-established bodies (like e.g. the IRC, Delhi), and the help of the CAAO in supporting our collaborations esp. with these latter two would be important; visibility on our website could be offered. (We also have the

category of “supporting association”, like the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)).

Lobna Ismail suggested that the website could also be used to attract, give visibility to and support existing but dormant or not-very-active societies. As Haun Saussy remarked, in that way we would be supporting the nascent and the dormant.

## **2.2. Appointment of an administrator: proposal of Convention with the Université de Picardie Jules Verne (UPJV)**

The President recalled that at our September meeting we undertook to seek to employ a stable administrator to look after the day-to-day management of information such as mail, updates of website, prep of newsletter and mailing, maintenance of membership list and mailing list; help plan new website and work with the IT developers; research, help identify and set up a software package (such as, for example, Microsoft Office or Google Workspace etc.); help set up support for research and Research Committees (e.g., the ICLA lectures and seminars, video presentations, etc.). The options proved complex, due to the difficulty of direct employment and the quagmire of different legislative and fiscal requirements in different countries, and the potential costs. The solution found in discussions with the Secretaries is, it is hoped, a good and robust compromise. Anne Duprat was asked to illustrate it.

Anne Duprat explained that we need someone employed on a stable basis and who can use French and English, and a clear legal standing on the basis of which to hire person; hiring via a French institution would help satisfy these requirements, but paying the incumbent as a permanent staff of a French institution would be very expensive. The convention drawn up with UPJV would give us the benefit of permanent institutional framework to take care of the administrative and legal implications of the service, while the person would be freelance and submit invoices for service provided. The draft convention has been drawn up for two years between ICLA and UPJV; it may be renewed periodically – or not, if we wish to discontinue it. If the EC agrees with the proposed Convention, we will move to advertising the position; knowledge of English and French would be necessary, but the person may be from anywhere.

Matthew Reynolds asked whether administrative help and website design were expected by the same person. Anne Duprat said that the person could identify what needed to be done, but the developer would be a professional. The composition of the interview panel was discussed; this would be likely to include Anne Duprat, Lucia Boldrini and a third person; if anyone wants to join, they should signal their interest to Anne or Lucia.

Marina Grishakova commented that the ICLA is fortunate to have Anne Duprat, whose ability to move immense amounts of resources and people she has been witness to.

Helga Mitterbauer proposed that the convention and the following action be approved, seconded by Adelaide Russo.

Vote: 21 approved , Abstain 1, Against 0.

## **2.3. Research Development Committee: inviting proposals for new Research Committees**

The President said that this item is on the agenda because we haven’t expanded the range and scope of topics and areas of research for a while, and it is useful to review this issue and



stimulate discussion. She invited Matthew Reynolds to elaborate, as Chair of Research Development Committee. Matthew Reynolds explained that time-bound Research Committees often become SRCs, and we need to stimulate fresh research.

Marko Juvan suggested that a RC on Digital Comparative Studies (not as a problem or theme but as a tool of comparative literature, including computer generated texts, AI etc) would be important at this time. Youngmin Kim also emphasised that this was related to the theme of the 2025 congress.

Matthew noted that if we present a face hospitable to research on the website, then we would be in a position to attract research ideas and help to grow them into projects. The resumption of the newsletter will also be useful to reach scholars and highlight the funding support in place. The President said that we could modify the website to reflect our support for research proposals in development.

Lobna Ismail pointed out that there was no RC on comparative literature in the Arab world, which includes literature in English, French, German, Spanish, Japanese... Together with Fatiha Taib, they proposed an Arabic comparative literature working group which would add to the diversity of ICLA. Toshiko Ellis also pointed out that Yuriko Yamanaka is a specialist in Persian, and this would indeed extend the scope of our research.

Matthew Reynolds emphasised that the deadline for proposal of a new RC is the 31<sup>st</sup> of March every year and invited concrete proposals as well as informal approaches to develop such proposals.

#### **2.4. Procedures for requests of funding by Research Committees**

The President said that this item was on the agenda to remind everyone of funding structures and sums previously agreed (see minutes of June 2021), review whether we are still satisfied that they support our aims, and ensure that procedures remain transparent, fair and sustainable.

It is assumed that committees should seek external sources of funding; but all Committees can apply for up to \$1,000 every three-year term, plus for exceptional funds for publication costs.

The approx. yearly sum at present (with 11 RCs) would come to c. US\$4,000 on average (plus publishing costs). There no clear protocols for application beyond the recommendation in the RDC's report of June 2020 that:

“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”

At present, therefore, requests are made every year, via the reports to the EC. The President asked, are the procedures in the wording above sufficient, or do we feel the need for more detailed criteria for deciding? Moreover, is a single deadline once a year sufficient, or should we have interim deadlines? (for example, if there are cases of missing deadlines for which the funding is required); and if we had interim deadlines for these urgent cases, how do we manage them – should there be a small committee to evaluate such requests? The President noted that we may well decide there is no need to change anything if we are confident that

the Research Committees are supported appropriately, transparently and fairly. The item was opened for discussion.

Helga Mitterbauer said she has been hesitant to apply for funding over the last few years, but CHLEL many projects ongoing, coming to a substantial sum every year; the ICLA has regularly provided publishing costs, can this still be applied for? Matthew Reynolds said that publication costs are considered on case to case basis, and the ICLA can support CHLEL.

Lobna, Oana, Adelaide thought that it may be useful to have 2 deadlines, one every six months. Isabel Gómez noted that, logistically, it may be simpler to increase flexibility by considering reimbursements, rather than having 2 deadlines. Matthew Reynolds noted that reimbursements are difficult to refuse and may put pressure on the committee; and that out-of-cycle applications may receive different and more favourable treatment (because there are fewer demands on the funds) than at the regular deadline; he felt it would be fairer to all if the EC makes funding decisions considering all applications in a gathered field. This was generally felt to be more appropriate.

Noriko Hiraishi asked if there was funding for website creation separately or whether that was included in the US\$1000 for research committees every 3 years. The response was that it is included in the \$1,000. Noriko asked if retrospective funding can be granted to the Comics and Graphic Narratives Committee, which had created a website but has not asked for funding. Matthew Reynolds pointed out that a request for funding needed to be included in the report submitted to the EC; the President concurred; as the principle (just re-stated) is to request in advance, the Committee will be able to ask for renewal in next year's report, but not in retrospect.

At the end of this discussion, the President noted that there would be no change of the rules and thanked everyone for their contributions.

## **2.5. Proposal to change of the name of the Treasury for “Europe, Africa and the Middle East” to Treasury for “Europe, Africa and West Asia”**

The President said that this was a suggestion from Ipshita Chanda and invited her to speak to it. Ipshita Chanda said that “the Middle East” implied a particular centre (Europe) and way of looking at the world, whereas “West Asia” is a geographically neutral term, and North Africa is already included in the Treasury's name. However Lobna Ismail (who is from Egypt, a country across Europe and Asia) did not feel ME is obsolete or perceived negatively in the ME; in fact, as Robert Young also pointed out, MENA / MENAC (Middle East and North Africa[n Countries]) are common acronyms. It was resolved to postpone any decision and consult with our colleagues in the ME / who work on ME Literatures to ask for views.

The day's business ended with Sandra Bermann, the previous President, expressing her support and pleasure at the way in which things have been progressing, with expansion in research and streamlining of administration. The President thanked Sandra, reminding us all that many of these measures were begun during her Presidency; the members also expressed their gratitude and appreciation for Sandra's work as President.

### **Day 3, Wednesday 21 June, 3-5 PM CEST**

Members present : Lucia Boldrini, Angelo Piepoli, Alexandra Lopes, Adelaide Russo, Anne Duprat, Anne Tomiche, Chandra Mohan, Emmanuelle Santos, EV Ramakrishnan, Haun Saussy, He Chengzhou, Helga Mitterbauer, Ipshita Chanda, Isabel Gómez, Kitty Millet, Matthew Reynolds, Liedeke Plate, Lobna Ismail, Marina Grishakova, Massimo Fusillo, Noriko Hiraishi , Oana Fotache, Rita Terezinha Schmidt, Tracy Lassiter, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Toshiko Ellis, Youngmin Kim, Yuriko Yamanaka.

#### **3.1. Finances: Current position**

##### *Report from Treasurer for Asia-Pacific:*

Yuriko Yamanaka informed that the remittance from CLAI came just in time for the EC, so her report had been updated, and had to be re-approved by the EC.

She also explained that as she had opened a new account in the name of ICLA-Asia Pacific and had made a bank seal, to use instead of the signature; so when a new treasurer would be appointed, she could pass on the account with the seal, with less administrative hassle than opening a new account.

There remained the problem of the CCLA's Chinese bank refusing to transfer money to an organisation's account and wanting to pay into a personal account – so the remittance from the Chinese association was still being being paid into Noriko Hiraishi's account, previously opened for the ICLA, which could therefore not be closed yet. Yuriko also reported that colleagues from a university in Indonesia asked to join ICLA as a group, and, as discussed on the first day, Haun and Toshiko's Committee could reach out to them.

The President thanked Yuriko, not least for setting up the new account, and Noriko for her continued help. It was a relief that the ICLA funds were no longer held in a personal account (which would be difficult to justify if we have our accounts audited), though we still have to resolve the problem of the CCLA's payments.

The updated report of the Treasurer for Asia-Pacific was put to the vote, proposed by Lucia, seconded by Anne D.

Approve 17, Abstain 0, Against 0.

##### *Report from the Treasurer for the Americas:*

Adelaide Russo reported on her efforts to reconnect with the Canadian association, which is in the process of changing treasurers; she also was trying to contact the ACLA (which, as a "Supporting Association", had undertaken since 2021 to give US\$ 1000 per year, on an agreement for 3 years, but had never paid) and was planning to contact other associations across Latin America to invite them to become members (or associate in other forms, as we discussed on day 1). She was also in the process of setting up a better facility for making donations to ICLA through the credit card payment via the website of the Louisiana State University. The President thanked Adelaide for her efforts.

##### *Report from the Treasurer for Africa, Europe and the Middle East:*

Alexandra Lopes informed that attempts to transfer the account from the previous Treasurer and President to the current ones were frustratingly difficult and included lengthy delays with communications and requests of documents that were not possible to obtain in Portugal. The branch where the account is held is in a small provincial town, with little experience of international associations as customers. Alexandra communicated her willingness to travel to France to sign the necessary documents to gain access to the account. There was agreement that the account could be transferred to a branch or other bank in Paris, to be more accessible. The former treasurer, Roberto Vecchi, can still access the account and has cooperated when asked, but it is cumbersome for him, and – since he is no longer Treasurer – it is not appropriate to ask him to perform operations. There are now about 5000€ in the current account + 20,000€ in the savings account, which cannot be moved to current until access is possible. The Treasurer said that some associations are renewing their memberships, some still need to be renewed, and that the account should be somewhat replenished soon. However, Alexandra Lopes expressed the concern that this account pays for the high yearly costs of *Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research*, and that we may not have the funds to cover the next issue, which may have to be met by one of the other accounts. Alexandra also informed that she was trying to identify a new platform (such as Paypal or Stripe) as a further facility to enable members to pay online.

### *General position*

The President said that overall, between the 3 accounts, if added up correctly, the ICLA has c. US\$197,000, with some 2023 NA memberships still to come in.

The E-A-ME treasury traditionally pays for *RL/LR*, as the costs are in Euros (the most recent expenses for this were c. 13,445 Euros, nearly US\$ 15,000). It would make sense to pay from this account for the new Administrator as it will also be in Euros (the expected sum is c. €10,000 / \$11,000 yearly), but one of the other accounts will need to help.

The above, plus the research expenses of c. US\$ 4,000 yearly for RC funding + the yearly subvention for the first book, result in regular yearly outgoings of c. US\$ 30,000 + publication costs + some other small sums (web renewal costs, mailing list annual costs).

In addition, expenses that we expect to meet every three years are: \$10,000 for Congress (to be paid soon, probably by the Asia-Pacific account); + Balakian and ECR Prizes (up to \$3,250), resulting in c. US\$ 13,500 every three years, or c. US\$ 4,500 yearly on average.

We can therefore estimate our regular yearly outgoings as up to c. US\$ 40,000 on average (incl. the new Administrator). New expenses to be met soon will include the new website development (mostly one-off) and software package ( recurrent, but not very high).

While we need to make sure that renewal payments are done on schedule by associations, there is no immediate cause for concern overall for the funds of the Association as a whole.

The payment of \$10,000 for the 2025 Congress in Korea – payable once the MOU is signed – would come from Asia Pacific account; Yuriko Yamanaka asked to be informed with some advance so that the transfer can be done smoothly.

### **3.2. Requests for funding: Translation Committee**

Isabel Gómez, outgoing Chair of the Translation Committee, explained that Youngmin Kim had now taken over the Chair. Papers from a workshop based on theme of the 2021 conference, with international distribution of scholars, had been selected for a volume to be published by Routledge. The request is for US\$ 1,090 for Open Access publication of the Introductory chapter (which has a detailed introduction to the entire volume), and for US\$ 510 for indexing, coming to a total of US\$ 1,600.

The President confirmed that this is in line with the agreed principle (see yesterday's discussion) that a committee may apply to the EC for help with publication costs.

Matthew Reynolds, supported by others, suggested going for the higher OA fee so as to have it published in OA immediately, without the 12-24 months' delay. Haun Saussy pointed out that some universities have standing agreements with publishers, to cover OA costs, maybe one of the chapter authors can avail of this benefit through their universities? Liedeke Plate agreed with Matthew Reynolds and said some authors may have access to OA, but we wouldn't want inequalities between authors, so we could publish the Introduction in OA, and encourage authors to make their chapters available after the embargo period (usually 18 months; the length of time required by Routledge should be checked) on "green" OA repositories such as institutional ones or Academia.edu.

Isabel Gómez calculated that for immediate OA, the cost would be US\$ 2,073.

Helga Mitterbauer proposed that the grant be approved and Haun Saussy seconded.

Result of the vote: Approve 17 , Abstain 1, Against 0.

Matthew Reynolds reminded that the ICLA had to be acknowledged, and Isabel Gómez said that she would revise the report to acknowledge the financial support from the ICLA.

### **3.3. Participation Grants Committee**

The Chair, Oana Fotache, reminded the EC that the Committee was originally set up as "Travel Grants Committee", and that it was re-named "participation grants" because, due to the pandemic, most were participating online and the grants were made in the form of fee-waivers. However, subsidies for participation can now be given in various forms: travel, fee-waivers, accommodation... The Cttee will discuss and propose forms and criteria at the 2024 EC meeting, when an overall sum should also be agreed. US\$ 2,000 was made available for fee-waivers for the Tbilisi Congress; ideally the overall sum for grants should be higher in 2025. We may furthermore encourage NAs to offer their own support for their members to attend ICLA congresses, and we can consider, case by case, requests for support for other purposes than Congress attendance.

We should advertise criteria on the ICLA website and newsletter as soon as approved by the EC.

Youngmin Kim said he would seek ECR support for the 2025 Congress and that he would want many ECRs from East Asia to participate; he invited donations to be made for this. The President suggested having an option for donations on the Congress registration form.

### **3.4. ECARE Report**

Emanuelle Santos reported that the book subvention prize for ECRs had been disbursed by the ICLA. Colleagues being awarded ECARE prizes would be included in the Congress program. She also outlined the timeline for administering the first book award.

She noted that in the last 3-year cycle, a capacitation event had been held at Princeton; she proposed to make this a recurrent event, mid-cycle between Congresses, to be co-organised by ECARE with university partners indifferent geographical areas, speaking to the realities of the region.

She also proposed to launch an ECARE mentoring scheme, working on it in next 12 months to present to the EC in 2024, and prepare for the launch next calendar year, at the 2025 Congress. She asked the members of the EC and of Research Committees for their active participation in ECARE initiatives, to spread activities among ECRs and students.

The President proposed to update the schedule of events and prizes on the website. A mailing list of ECRs should be possible, as students either register via the website for free or are identified as students by their Association; other ECRs who are not students should be able to self-identify and join the mailing list.

The President asked Emanuelle to elaborate on the point in her report about seeking voting rights for the ECARE Chair. Emanuelle pointed out that ECRs do not have a voice in the EC, and enabling the Chair to vote would give them better representation. The President said that according to the Statutes, advisory / administrative committees chairs don't have a vote, only elected members do; but that we can discuss whether ECARE has a different role or status from other administrative committees insofar as it represents a large constituency of ICLA members, and whether therefore voting rights could be justified. Anne Tomiche pointed out that this would create a new new category of committee. The President suggested we ask the Structures Committee to look into it, in discussion with ECARE, and – if an agreement is reached – propose an amendment to the Statutes to be voted on by the membership in 2025.

Lucia Boldrini proposed that the ECARE report be approved; Oana Fotache seconded.

Vote: Approve 20, Abstain 0, Against 0.

### **3. 5. Open discussion and any other business**

The President asked, as we moved for the last few minutes of the EC meeting into the open discussion and Any Other Business, whether there are any other actions colleagues would like to propose to support ECRs, or other matters for discussion.

There being none, the President thanked everyone for attending, for the reports, for voting on them, for contributions to discussions, for the offer of hosting the 2024 EC meeting and 2025 Congress and EC meeting, for having made the 3 days of meetings very productive, and closed the meeting.