

AILC/ICLA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

8-9 SEPTEMBER 2024, DELHI UNIVERSITY

8 September 2024, 4.30pm IST

PRESENT IN PERSON: Lucia Boldrini, Stefan Buchenberger, Sayantan Dasgupta, Toshiko Ellis, Lobna Ismail, Oana Fotache, Marc Maufort, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Ipshita Chanda, E.V. Ramakrishnan, Irma Ratiani, Matthew Reynolds, Marcio Seligmann-Silva, Anne Tomiche

PRESENT ONLINE: Jorgen Bruhn, Raul Calzoni, HE Chengzhou, Anne Duprat, Marina Grishakova, Stefan Helgesson, Noriko Hiraishi, Zhang Hui, Marko Juvan, Youngmin Kim, Alexandra Lopes, Helga Mitterbauer, Liedeke Plate, Emanuelle Santos, Rita Terezinha Schmidt, ClotildeThouret, AnneTomiche, YurikoYamanaka, Zhang Longxi.

PRESENT IN PERSON BY INVITATION: Massimo Fusillo, Anca Mihalache

1. Welcome and thanks.

The President Lucia Boldrini apologised for the delay in starting the meeting due to technical issues at the venue and welcomed those present in person at New Delhi and online.

She thanked the administrative and academic officials of Delhi University, as well as the Faculty and students of Faculty of Arts and its many Allied Centres and Allied Colleges; the Presidents Kavita Sharma and Tapati Mukherjee, the office bearers and the Executive Council of the Comparative Literature Association of India, for helping along with the very complex arrangements and for allowing us to associate this meeting with their biennial conference, starting on the 10th of September. Both the U of Delhi and CLAI, each in different but related ways, have shown great generosity, allowing us to meet in person for the first time after many years, between Congresses. Thanks to the Administrative Staff of the International Guest House where we are staying and where this meeting is being held.

The President remembered Professor Chandra Mohan, General Secretary of the Comparative Literature Association of India and a colleague in the Executive Council of the AILC/ICLA, who sadly passed away on 27 March 2024. She pointed out that something essential was missing in the EC meeting in Delhi without Chandra, knowing how much he had wanted this meeting to happen in India, and how much he had already invested into this combined meeting of the EC and CLAI, up to the last moments in his hospital bed. Lucia was sure she was speaking for all of the Executive Council in saying that we all missed his presence, that his colleagues in Delhi and CLAI who knew him well would feel his absence even more strongly, and that therefore they deserved to be thanked even more warmly for having persevered, through times when it looked like the meeting may not happen.

Lucia also thanked Anne Duprat, who was handling the Zoom link from Oxford – and who had done much work to prepare this meeting – and Ipshita Chanda for the essential work behind the scenes, for helping make this meeting happen; and all EC members for all their work and their reports.

She conveyed her warm thanks to everyone present online and offline, for their patience and cooperation while the technical issues were being resolved.

The President then asked Anne Duprat to explain the voting process to be followed during the hybrid meeting.

2. Introductions.

While full introductions were skipped due to the delay in the start of the meeting, Lucia introduced our Administrator, Dr Anca Michalache, to the members of the Executive Council. We were able to appoint the Administrator when access to our European account was finally unblocked in Dec 2023/Jan 2024.

3. Confirmation of votes on reports, and any questions raised in responses.

The number of responses was recorded as 27 out of a total of 36 voting members of the Executive Council, with authors of reports abstaining from voting on their own reports.

All the reports have been approved.

The President proposed that financial matters related to the reports of the Treasurers would be taken up during the reporting on agenda items on Research committees and financial matters.

Matters specific to the reports' content raised by EC members were discussed :

- i. The Standing Research Committee on Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature: The report includes work in Chinese literature in general or comparative literature by the members rather than activities relating to the scope of the RC, which is Scriptural Reasoning. The work is commendable in itself, but is not relevant to this committee. The President requested that the report focus on the aims of the committee, and the items included be relevant to the scope of the research committee's stated aims.
- ii. Research Committee on Literature, Arts and Media (CLAM) has updated its report which has specific inclusions and updated information. The updated report has been circulated to the members of the EC before this meeting. Jorgen Bruhn explained the updates and added, as a brief comment on the RC's activities, that they are planning a conference including early- and mid-career colleagues in early 2025 focused on the question of media studies and new materialisms.
- iii. The Standing Research Committee on Comics and Graphic Narratives' request for funds was discussed. It was pointed out that funds sought for the maintenance of the website (€612.72 (c \$677) every three years) and for awards to student-presenters (\$664) would exceed the \$1000 limit for each 3-year cycle agreed for each Research Committee.
Clarification was also sought on the proposal to request individual members participating in the activities of the committee to pay a sum towards the website. The President pointed out that membership of the ICLA enables individual members to participate in its activities including the activities of each research committee – donations may be invited by research committees in some form, but to request money apart from the ICLA membership seems illegitimate.
The Chair of the committee agreed to return to the members with the issues raised by the EC [on Sept 9, at the start of the second day's deliberations, the Chair reported that the committee would amend their financial plans in accordance with the suggestions made by the EC].
- iv. The Balakian Prize: Marina Grishakova's questions (concerning theses that have passed the examination and are published by the university, unrevised, as a matter of procedure at certain universities) were taken up in the discussion, in which E.V. Ramakrishnan, Matthew Reynolds, Lobna Ismail, Zhang Longxi and Anne Tomiche participated. Restatement of the criteria by adjusting the wording to "thesis or derived from thesis" was suggested by Matthew Reynolds and seconded by Lucia Boldrini. These changes would be reflected on the website for the next cycle of the Balakian Prize. This

would clarify the existing criteria in relation to varying thesis publishing requirements of different universities.

4. Report of the Nominating Committee.

Stefan Helgesson shared the list of nominations for the 2025 elections at Seoul, and informed the Executive Council of the latest nomination.

The President thanked and congratulated the Nominating Committee, and outlined the next step leading to the election. If this list is provisionally approved by this meeting, final updates can be made and the list in final form can be approved at the online January meeting of the ICLA EC and published officially online; thereafter, members can make additional nominations following the procedure outlined in the Statutes.

Stefan Helgesson suggested a change in the composition of the ballot, which was referred to the Structures Committee, as it entailed a change in the Statutes which could only be done through a vote by the General Assembly.

Lucia Boldrini pointed out that this would be added to another issue previously discussed which the Structures Committee should also discuss regarding voting by Chairs of Standing Research Committees where there was more than one Chair. The Structures Committee should consider these in time for any proposed changes to the Statutes, if and where necessary, could be put to the vote in the 2025 elections.

5. Electronic elections of the Officers and Executive Committee 2025.

The President proposed that as we now have acquainted ourselves with the process of e-elections, which were first implemented in 2022 and concluded during the Congress in Tbilisi, we do not need a professional IT support service provider to manage the elections or liaise with the platform on which the elections would be held.

She proposed that

- i. we purchase directly from the platform a package that includes technical support during the vote
- ii. Timeline should be similar to last elections: open for a 3-week period, closing during the Congress (midnight CEST, probably on Day 2). Votes will be counted automatically and a report produced, with announcement at the General Assembly, at the Congress.
- iii. An election committee be constituted, comprising
 - Chair of the Structures Committee (as last time)
 - Administrator, who is not an EC member as such, but will need to liaise with the e-voting system to ensure the membership list and electoral register coincide;
 - The President as she does not stand for elections;
 - One other elected EC member (who may have to step back from certain aspects if they do stand for re-election)

The President invited anyone (especially those with experience of elections) to volunteer by sending an email expressing interest.

She then laid out a plan of action: she suggested that we should identify and confirm the platform in the next weeks, obtain a quotation, prepare a timeline, and present it via email to the EC, so that we search for a different solution if the one found does not seem adequate to the EC, and then we approve the solution and the costs in the online EC meeting in January.

6. Congress 2025

Youngmin Kim reported on the plans for Seoul 2025, including the change of venue from Dongguk University campus to KINTEX; this would lead to students being accommodated in a place different from the rest of the participants, but no organisational issue was anticipated due to this, as the distance between the venue and the accommodation was only 13 minutes on the new bullet train in Seoul. Oana Fotache asked whether some rooms could be reserved for students in the accommodation plan already suggested, for those receiving Participation Grants. The cost for transport and accommodation of students and ECRs was discussed, which Youngmin Kim promised to look into and update on the website.

Youngmin Kim outlined the plan for the 2025 EC meeting, to be held in Seoul (July 25 to 27, 2025) and suggested that the EC members could opt for a temple or hotel stay in Seoul.

Yuriko Yamanaka, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami and Ipshita Chanda pointed out some specific issues in the recently activated conference website regarding data entry by participants from specific locations and the options for group submissions, which should include provision for submission of proposals from ICLA Research Committees.

These issues would be taken up with the website technicians and solved as soon as practicable.

The EC proposed a 14 day extension of the deadline for group proposal submissions and compress the proposed timeline such that these changes did not adversely affect participation.

7. Finances: Current position

The treasurers commented on the position of finances vis a vis the accounts they operated and on the overall position: when all the national associations pay their membership dues, the finances would be balanced, with a healthy sum in reserves.

The EC noted that new expenses had been created in the past three years, which, as the President pointed out, had been created because these reserves existed and projecting that regular expenses would be made up by income. Specific difficulties national associations faced in payment of membership dues because of financial laws in the country were brought up and discussed. Yuriko Yamanaka observed that some Asian membership lists could not be updated since membership dues of some national associations were outstanding.

The President proposed that national organisations be reassured that their membership lists can be immediately updated in order that the members could apply to participate in the Seoul Congress, with the understanding that the dues would in any case have to be cleared in a timely manner.

The issue of membership ID cards for members was discussed, especially for groups other than national associations or institutionally affiliated bodies. Lucia Boldrini explained that she hoped that the new website, under construction, may facilitate both the process of membership updates and documentation for proof of membership.

8. Expression of Interest for hosting AILC/ICLA Congress 2028

Anne Duprat presented the expressions of interest for hosting the AILC/ICLA Congress 2028. The following table summarizes the key information and enables comparison – but it must be emphasized that these are Eol and not formal bids, and all details are provisional and can be revised:

Location	Rome (Italy) and Naples for Pre-congress	Glasgow(UK)	Birmingham(UK)	Piraeus (Greece)
Dates	20-26 July or 27 July-2 Aug.	3rd week of August	24-28 July 2028 or 31 July-4 Aug.	25 -31 July 2028
Thematic Outline	"Crossing Borders: The Novel in The Third Millennium"	"Space and Place: Comparing Literatures in the City and Beyond"	"Comparative Literature and the Environment"	"Universalize the literary, literarize the universal"
Academic Host Institution(s)	- La Sapienza Università di Roma - - Università Federico I di Napoli <i>in collaboration with an agency/service: Symposia Srl</i>	University of Glasgow <i>in collaboration with an agency/service: Glasgow Convention Bureau</i>	University of Birmingham <i>in collaboration with an agency/service Conferences and Events, University of Birmingham</i>	University of Piraeus
Person Responsible for the Proposition	Emilia di Rocco, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature Rome "La Sapienza". President of European Society of Comparative Literature	Shanti Graheli and Michael Syrotinski, Co-Directors of the Research Centre for Comparative Literature and Translation Studies	Emanuelle Santos, Associate Professor in Modern Languages Chair of the AILC-ICLA ECARE Committee	Christos Nikou, Member of Faculty University of Piraeus
Fees or cost/person	Standard: 260€ Early/330€ Reg/400 on site Student: 130€ Early/ 190€ Reg. /260 € on site	£160 Standard £80 Students	£384.87 (= cost/pers)	120 € Standard 50€ Students

Anne Duprat was thanked for having prepared such as clear table for comparison, and all Eols were praised for their professionalism. Discussion ensued, and suggestions regarding scope of thematic focus, funding plans and proposals, or absence thereof, size of core committee, and support networks, were discussed.

It was decided that the expressions of interest be given the go-ahead to give final shape to their proposals for presenting to the EC and the General Assembly in 2025, with help from the Programme Committee. We can feedback and work with proposers to help them develop stronger formal bids.

The EC also decided to extend the deadline for final proposals to end of December 2024, to encourage other Eols from other parts of the world.

9. Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research:

The President thanked the Editor of RL/LR Marc Maufort for the way he has transformed the journal and made it such a professional one.

Marc Maufort outlined the current situation of the journal, as he planned to step down as editor after the 2025 issue, and offered to coordinate the search for a new editor. He would be happy to act as co-Editor for the 2026 issue, to ensure smooth transition, and remain on the editorial board thereafter.

It was proposed that a search committee for the new editor be constituted, with a job description provided by Marc Maufort. The search for the new editor should be completed by the end of 2025.

The President thanked everyone and closed the meeting, which would resume at 16:30 IST on 9 September.

9 September 2024, 4.30 pm IST

PRESENT IN PERSON: Lucia Boldrini, Stefan Buchenberger, Sayantan Dasgupta, Toshiko Ellis, Lobna Ismail, Oana Fotache, Marc Maufort, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Ipshita Chanda, E.V. Ramakrishnan, Irma Ratiani, Matthew Reynolds, Marcio Seligmann-Silva, Anne Tomiche

PRESENT ONLINE: Raul Calzoni, HE Chengzhou, Anne Duprat, Marina Grishakova, Noriko Hiraishi, Zhang Hui, Marko Juvan, Youngmin Kim, Alexandra Lopes, Kitty Millet, Helga Mitterbauer, Jeronimo Pizarro-Jaramillo, Liedeke Plate, Adelaide Russo, Emanuelle Santos, Rita Terezinha Schmidt, Haun Saussy, Zhang Hui, Tegan Zimmermann

PRESENT IN PERSON BY INVITATION: Massimo Fusillo, Anca Mihalache

The President noted a mistake in the Voting List circulated by email, which attached the request for funding to be discussed at the meeting to the Translation Committee, but which should have been attached to CHLEL and Graphic Narratives and Comic Studies. Funding requests would be taken at the end of RDC matters.

10. Update on Communications (website, newsletter, communication & storage /archiving package, membership list, mailing lists)

The President invited the administrator, Anca Mihalache to present the details of the website upgrade and other communication matters.

Anca outlined the progress on the ongoing website redevelopment and the focus on simplicity, with space for the Standing Research Committees and the National Associations. Regarding the communication packages being considered, she described the comparative advantages and disadvantages, including cost-effectiveness as well as access across the world including China; personalised AILC/ICLA addresses for administrators and office bearers to maintain continuity even when individual officers change. As soon as some final details are received from the service providers it will be possible to reach a decision.

11. Report on Research Development Committee

Two new committees had been proposed as time-limited RCs (Digital Comparative Literature and Language Contact in Literature: Europe) and one as a new standing committee (Arabic Comparative Literature). All three

had been approved in the online vote. A discussion focused on the scope of the proposed research committee on Language Contact: Europe; Marko Juvan, Adelaide Russo and Marina Grishakova participated in the discussion regarding whether an extension of the scope beyond Europe should be considered; it was observed that it is legitimate to focus on particular areas of the world and that in time scholars with additional expertise could join the committee and expand its scope; it was also pointed out that the non-equality of European languages was also part of the focus. It was agreed not to request a change of title.

The proposals of committees proposing upgrade to Standing Research Committee (Religion, Ethics and Literature) or continuation for the third term (CLAM) had also been approved.

Questions were raised about the by-laws of proposed committees and the Digital Comparative Literature committee's by-laws were cited as both detailed and clear. The committees up for renewal for the 3rd term and those proposing change from time-limited to standing research committees were invited to frame by-laws (which had in each case to be approved by the EC), as well as finalise their Chairs in time for the next General Assembly, so that this body could ratify the Chairs at its meeting in 2025.

The discussion regarding by-laws ended with the proposal, which was approved, that a template for by-laws be produced by the Research Development Committee to include the common required elements, to which RCs can add additional elements if required.

Arising out of the RDC discussion and given the condition of finances discussed the previous day, funding requests were taken up for voting.

Question 1 (motion proposed by Adelaide Russo, seconded by Liedeke Plate): Do we agree to pay 2000€ as publication support to CHLEL?

Result: 17 Yes + 1 abstention: Approved

Question 2 (motion proposed by Adelaide Russo, seconded by Ipshita Chanda): Do we agree to pay 700€ to Jan Morrens for his work for CHLEL?

Result: 17 Yes: Approved

Question 3 (motion proposed by Stefan Buchenberger; seconded by Lucia Boldrini) Request for 1000 \$ of which c. 700 toward the domain name over 3 years and 300 for 2 prizes of \$150 for the Venice Conference, for the 20th anniversary of Comics and Graphic Narratives

Result: 18 yes + 1 abstention: Approved

12. Participation Grants committee report:

Oana Fotache reported that at the Tbilisi Congress in 2022, 1500 US dollars were utilised to provide 26 registration fee waivers for students and early career researchers. The aim in the future was to increase in-person participation, and given the state of the finances, the proposal was to increase the amount reserved for participation grants to 3000 USD to be utilised as registration fee waivers, travel support (up to a maximum of \$300 per grant) and some money (suggested \$200 per grant) towards accommodation of student participants at Seoul.

Call for applications (based on the CV and motivation letter from prospective grantees) would be published by end of October and the results would be published by March 2025, so that participants would be able to register by the early-bird deadline. Adelaide Russo and Emmanuelle Dos Santos strongly endorsed this proposal, outlining the resources available in the respective treasuries and including donations received for ECARE.

Youngmin Kim agreed to reserve some subsidised rooms for scholars who availed of the participation grants, but would be able to tell the exact number by October.

Question 4 (motion proposed by Youngmin Kim seconded by Takayuki Yokota-Murakami). Request for 3000\$ participation grants for Congress 2025
Result: 20 yes: Approved

Funding support for graduate students' conferences, which had been initially discussed at a previous EC meeting with a view to returning to it as part of the Participation Grants Committee's work, was mentioned and taken up for general discussion. It was decided that research-oriented events for students and early career researchers organised by a National Associations could be supported as matching grant, in partnership with the National Association. The ICLA would have to be acknowledged along with the ICLA logo.

After discussion on disbursement, it was proposed that the association could invest up to \$2500 US dollars every year, and a maximum number of 10 grants of up to \$250 could be given each year out of this amount. This was put to vote.

Question 5 (motion proposed by Lucia Boldrini, seconded by Takayuki Yokota-Murakami): 2500 US dollars would be available to disburse up to 10 grants of up to \$250 every year for students and early career researchers conferences, with matching grants from the National Association
Result: 21 Yes: Approved

13. Early Career Researchers Committee

Emanuelle Dos Santos updated the EC regarding the current cycle of prizes and awards administered by the committee; she outlined her plans for future activities like mentoring of early career scholars and invited ideas for mentoring structures.

She informed that she had prepared a document in collaboration with Youngmin Kim for the website of the 2025 conference in Seoul.

14. Proposal of collaboration with the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

The proposal arises with a meeting of the President with Professor Lothar Jordan of the University of Vienna, Chair of the MoW Sub-Committee on Education and Research, on his invitation. Lucia Boldrini outlined the history of ICLA's relationship with the Memory of the World project of the UNESCO and the proposed areas for collaboration:

- Developing and approving a "Manifesto for Safeguarding the Memory of Translators and Translations" to promote ways of conserving evidence both of the translation and the translator. The request is to nominate one person as our representative on the working group that would develop this manifesto.
- Contributing to the working group being formed on "Lost Memory: Research on the Reconstruction of Lost and Dispersed Libraries"; Achim Hölter has already indicated willingness to be part of it.

- Invitation to provide experts that can advise when objects are nominated for inclusion in the International [MoW] Register and MoW Regional Registers (Africa; Asia-Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean). (No names required now as this would be on a case-by-case basis.)
- Collaboration of more academic / scholarly nature, such as on research on “metaphors of memory” and exploring other areas of possible contact between MoW and comparative literature.

Prof Jordan also pointed out that African heritage and heritage in relation to Gender are areas of particular interest.

Finally: the UNESCO/Jikji Memory of the World Prize, established in 2004 (30,000 US\$), sponsored by the Republic of Korea, aims to commemorate the inscription of the “Buljo jikji simche yojeol” (the oldest existing book of movable metal print in the world, on the Memory of the World Register), and to reward efforts contributing to the preservation and accessibility of documentary heritage as a common heritage of humanity. They have an office and an exhibition in Seoul. Given our focus on technology of our Congress in Seoul in 2025, it would be interesting to organise a visit there during the congress and possibly also a roundtable discussion, or workshop on one of the possible themes of collaboration.

The EC approved the AILC/ICLA ‘s relation with the MoW project at various levels, to be explored further. Some members of the EC indicated their interest in collaborating with aspects of the proposals above, and were invited to email their interest to the President.

15. Sustaining membership and links with other organisations.

Toshiko Ellis and Haun Saussy reported that they were exploring more concrete inter-association links, though none had been firmed up yet. They also described their experiences with reaching out to non-formal associations or specialised arts and culture ancillaries. They requested members to help them identify such associations.

Members also noted that AILC/ICLA would look to extend relations with associations and organisations in areas of south east Asia, Africa and the West Asia.

16. Sustaining researchers and research: Annual lecture(s), Seminar(s), Workshop(s)

The President reminded the EC that in our meeting in 2022, we discussed making our research more visible and promoting the research done by our committees; we should proceed to implement those plans now:

- As we are moving towards having a new website, all research committees could prepare a short video presenting their work, to be published on the committees’ pages on the website.
- The annual lecture of the ICLA, to be given online (or in person and streamed), with the video then staying on our website. The lecture and lecturer should emerge from the work of our research committees rather than being someone external and invited for the purpose.
- An annual seminar or workshop (or possibly two per year) also promoting the work of the committees, also to be streamed online and/or published on the website, or organised as a workshop either for ECRs or more advanced specialists. Our own YouTube or Vimeo channel could also be set up; it was noted that the material had to be made accessible on platforms also available to Chinese colleagues (YouTube and Vimeo are not available in China).

- The President suggested we have a regular meeting of RC chairs (or even just an email group), to consult, coordinate and harmonise practices when appropriate (without imposing any kind of standardisation).

This was favourably received. All Research Committees were invited to begin planning their videos and volunteers were requested from among the committees to start the process of uploading. Similarly, volunteers were requested in planning the Annual lecture and/or workshop, ideally for either late 2024, which may be a bit too tight, or early months of 2025 - these can be promoted as part of the benefits of membership.

Youngmin Kim enquired about archives of past conferences which he could use for the upcoming Seoul conference. While the need for preserving and disseminating work was enthusiastically received, enquiries about the space available and expressions of concern regarding sustainability, and the balance between big data and the carbon footprint were also noted.

17. Open discussion and any other business

The President noted that the collected papers from the Congress in Vienna 2016 are now fully published in 5 volumes and one book has also been published from the Macau congress in 2019.

Irma Ratiani reported that volume 1 of the proceedings from Tbilisi Congress was ready and would be available shortly, online and open access; Volume 2 was on the way and Volume 3 would be published in spring 2025.

E.V. Ramakrishnan made an appeal to colleagues to publicise the Anna Balakian prize so that the number of entries would go up.

The President then renewed her thanks to all the members of the Committee for their attendance and votes, and closed the meeting at 9.00 pm IST.