

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the ICLA Executive Council**

**Brussels, Belgium, 24-25 August 2009.**

**In Attendance :** Hans Bertens, Jean Bessièrè, Vladimir Biti, Assumpta Camps, CHO Sung-Won, CHUNG Chung-ho, Eduardo Countinho, Angela Esterhammer, Biagio D'Angelo, Theo D'haen, Lieven D'Hulst, Ibra Diene, Mario Domenichelli, Manfred Engel, Dorothy Figueira, Douwe Fokkema, John Burt Foster, Gerald Gillespie, KAMIGAITO Ken'ichi, Alfons Knauth, Marc Maufort, Stéphane Michaud, Chandra Mohan, Jean-Marc Moura, Virgil Nemoianu, Anders Pettersson, Randolph Pope, Manfred Schmeling, Steven Shankmann, Ross Shideler, Inaga Shigemi, Steven Sondrup, Monica Spiridon, Robert Stockhammer, Miceala Symington, Kano Takayo, ZHOU Xiaoyi.

The First session, 24 August 2009, 9:00 a.m.

The session is opened at 9:00 a.m. by the President of the ICLA, Manfred Schmeling. He thanks Marc Maufort for having organized the meeting of the Executive Council of the ICLA on the campus of the Free University of Brussels. In turn, professor Maufort welcomes the assembly to his University.

The agenda calls first for an approval of the minutes of the meeting of the executive Council in Bremen in August 2008. Dorothy Figueira requests that the minutes be amended in order to include her introductory remarks. Given that correction, the minutes are unanimously approved.

After the executive council has also approved the agends, the President presents the report of his activities during the past year. He mentions his various communications with different committees that

were recently organized, dimensions the financial difficulties that the Association has experience since last year, on the one hand as a result of the failure of Lloyds of London and on the other hand as a result of a decline in the value of the pound sterling. With a French account now having been opened in the name of the association, these difficulties have been resolved. The President moreover favored various European associations by active participation in their are meetings. He has took part in the colloquium in Dijon organized by the French comparative literature Association; he took part in a colloquium of the Portuguese Association as well as in the meeting of the European Comparative Literature Network organized by Lucia Boldrini. The President is of the view that the ties between the ICLA and the European network should be strengthened. The President also mentions his participation in the colloquium of the Coordinating Committee of the ICLA in Århus in May 2009, which was remarkably organized by Svend Erik Larson. Manfred Schmeling then takes up the subject of the 2010 ICLA Congress. He is pleased with the resolution of the difficulty caused by the unforeseen necessity of changing the location of the Congress. It will therefore take place in Seoul in August 2010. Accompanied by Steven Sondrup, secretary of the ICLA, Manfred Schmeling went to Korea in May of 2009 and was able to resolve numerous technical difficulties. A considerable number of abstracts for presentations were submitted after the distribution of the second printed circular. Manfred Schmeling mentions then that he has received a proposal for the 2013 Congress from the University of Paris, Sorbonne IV. He is of the view that the acceptance or rejection of this proposal be decided by the executive Council during the meeting in Brussels in advance of the general assembly in Seoul. Finally Manfred Schmeling refers to certain problems with the administrative management of the Association. He wonders, in particular, if the Liaison Committee is really necessary? Who must decide on the venue where the triennial congress will be held? How long can a research committee remain active these different points will need to be debated within the Association Gerald Gillespie thinks that the decision of whether to organize the 2013

Congress in Paris must be made by the Executive Council in Brussels and presented as a formal recommendation to the General Assembly in Seoul. The report of the President is unanimously approved.

Randolph Pope then reads the report of the activities of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literature in European Languages of which he is the chair. In a brief, he mentions holding the annual meeting of the committee in Aarhus the 21 May 2009. The colloquium was brilliantly organized by Professor Svend Erik Larson of the Department of Comparative Literature at Århus University. Randolph Pope mentions that the modernism volumes edited by Astradur Eysteinnsson and Vivian Liska have been awarded the prestigious prize of the Association for the Study of Modernism for 2008. Randolph Pope mentions the success with which volumes on romanticism have been met as well as the volumes on the literary cultures of east central Europe. He announces the publication of several volumes in 2010. The volumes on the history of Nordic literatures edited by Steven Sondrup and Mark Sandberg are making good progress. Randolph Pope requests that the Association renews its financial support for the work of the committee. A subvention of US\$2000 for each volume is confirmed. The report of the committee is approved unanimously.

Theo D'Haen reads the report of the research committee of which he is the chair. Theo d'Haen begins by mentioning the difficulties met during the organization of his committee. His report raises the following questions: should the proceedings of the congresses of the ICLA continue to be published *in extenso*? Without doubt a strategy should be conceived for the selection of the themes of the congresses. Better coordination between the different committees of the ICLA should be implemented. Theo D'Haen recommends a greater collaboration between the ICLA and FILLM. Finally an evaluation of the activities of the Association during the last five years will be undertaken in order to make a number of recommendations during the discussion, Steven Sondrup recalls the possibility for committees to announce their activities on the website of the ICLA. Manfred Schmeling Wishes that a certain latitude of

choice be left to the local organizers of the triennial congresses. Gerald Gillespie stresses the essential role of the Research Committee in the evaluation of new proposals for the creation of the thematic research committees Dorothy Figueira stresses the importance for the Association of providing visibility to the different committees. The report is then approved unanimously.

In the absence of Paola Mildonian, Lieven D'Hulst reads the report of the Committee on Structures. The Committee has looked into specific problems: the procedures for the choice of a location for the triennial conference of the ICLA and the modalities of electing members of each new executive council. While the final choice of the venue of the triennial Congress has always in practice been left to the general assembly of the ICLA, it seems an opportune time to reconsider this procedure. It is proposed to establish a number of precise criteria for the selection of a location. The executive council will determine the venue of our congresses according to these criteria. The General Assembly will not be able to decide on the location of a Congress without the prior consent of the Executive Council. As far as voting electronically to elect the members of new executive councils is concerned, it appears that a number of questions with regard to legality and confidentiality arise. The General Assembly should, therefore, give its opinion about a revision of the statutes of the ICLA. This report invites considerable reflection. Gerald Gillespie stresses the necessity of announcing a proposition to modify the statutes now so that a valid vote can be taken in the general assembly in 2010. The conclusion is reached, however, that the question of voting electronically is not yet ready for a decision to be made. Who will have the right to vote? Moreover electronic address of all of the members is not known. In conclusion Manfred Schmeling suggests further study of the problem be undertaken by the committee and the preparation of a rough draft of the modifications of the statutes of the ICLA be made. It will be proposed that the Executive Council be charged with the responsibility of determining the location of the triennial Congress. The report is unanimously approved.

Vladimir Biti thereafter reads the report of the Liaison Committee. The work between the members of the Committee, the President, and the Korean colleagues took place in a most satisfactory fashion, Manfred Schmeling thinks that the existence of this committee occasionally makes matters too complex and he wonders about the pertinence of taking recourse to this committee in the future. It was agreed that this point would be left to the discretion of the president after the Congress in Seoul.

The morning session concluded with the presentation of the report of the nominating committee presented by Virgil Nemoianu. He describes the work undertaken by his committee and gives a list of the colleagues nominated to become part of the Executive Council of the ICLA from 2010 to 2013. The vote on these nominations was taken according to the function of the various offices. The nomination of Steven Sondrup as president of the ICLA was unanimously accepted. The nomination of Hans Bertens Zhou Xiaoyi, Monica Spiridon, and Eduardo Coutinho as vice presidents was unanimously accepted. The nomination of Suzanne Nalbantian and Marc Maufort to the office of secretaries was unanimously accepted. The nomination of Kathleen Komar, Micéla Symington, and Ken'ichi Kamigaito as treasurers was unanimously accepted. Thereafter a discussion began concerning the list of assessors to which it was decided to add the name of Anders Patterson. This list consists of the following colleagues: Vladimir Biti, Lucia Boldrini, Benjamin Boysen, François Claudon, Ibra Diene, Angela Esterhammer, Isabel Capeloa Gil, Cho Sung-Won, Peter Hajdu, Achim Hoelter, Ute Heidmann, Inaga Shigemi, Haun Saussy, Anne Tomiche, Hein Viljoen, and Zhang Longxi. Mario Domenichelli regrets that Italy is not represented. Virgil Nemoianu says that certain countries will be represented in different cycles. The necessary number of nominations for the office of assessor being twenty-four, it is decided that three additional names will be proposed by e-mail addressed to Virgil Nemoianu. With this stipulation, the list of candidates for the office of assessor is unanimously approved

Second Session, 24 August 2009, 2:00 PM

Steven Shankman reads his report concerning the activities of the Intercultural Studies Committee. He notes the progress of his collaboration with Prof. Doron. Haun Saussy (Yale University) has become a member of the Committee. Steven Shankman has collaborated moreover with Dorothy Figueira on a project concerning religion, ethics, and intercultural comparative literature. The work presented on this topic during the sessions co-organized by Dorothy Figueira and Steven Shankman at the colloquium in Bremen will be published in 2009 in a special section of the proceedings of the colloquium. Two sessions on intercultural comparative literature will also be organized for the Seoul Congress in 2010. The book co-edited by Steven Shankman, *Epics and Other Higher Narratives: An Intercultural Approach* as well as his monograph *Other Others: Levinas, Literature, Trans-Cultural Studies* should be published by the Seoul congress. The report is approved unanimously

Biagio D'Angelo reads report of the activities of the Research Committee on Latin America. He mentions convening a round table within the framework of the Third International Colloquium on Comparative Literature of the Southern Regions of Brazil in October 2008 and the organization of the Fourth Colloquium of the Peruvian Comparative Literature Association in December 2008. Biagio D'Angelo announces the publication in October 2009 of the book on American myths entitled *Comparaciones en Vertical: Conflictos Mitológicos en las Literaturas de las Americas*. The report is unanimously approved.

The report of the activities of the Literary Theory committee is read by Vladimir Biti in the absence of the committee's chair Galin Tihanov. The committee held its annual colloquium conjointly with the Rio de Janeiro Congress in August 2007. Another colloquium was organized in 2008 in Ljubljana. The proceedings will be published in 2009 in a special issue of *Primerjalna književnost*. At that colloquium Professor Robert Stockhammer was elected chair of the committee. The report was approved unanimously.

Kamigaito Ken'ichi then presents the report of the Research Committee on East Asia. He calls attention to the recent publication (September 2008) of the of the Rio de Janeiro workshop on comparative literature in East Asia and in South America. The book entitled *A Study of Northeast Asian Cultural Relationship* was also published in 2008. He announces the organization of the next two colloquia devoted to the themes close to the work of the committee, one in Seoul, the other in Nishinomiya (Japan). He regrets to have to mention the delay encountered in the publication of the second volume of the comparative literary history of east Asia. The report is unanimously approved.

In the absence of Sylvie André, Mark Maufort reads the account of the activities of the Research Committee on Literature of the Pacific. The proceedings of a colloquium organized by Prof. Raylene Ramsey from Auckland in November 2008, *At the Intersection of Cultures: About the Negotiation of Identities in the French and English Literature of the Pacific* will be published in 2010. A collective volume that focuses attention on the questions and problems peculiar to the literatures of the Pacific will be published by Champion in 2011 the report was unanimously approved.

The report of the Research Committee on Comparative Literature in the Digital Age, read in the absence of professor Dolores López, mentions the recent appearance of a special issue of *Neohelicon Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* entitled *Cyberliterature of the World* (No. 2, 2009). The report makes mention of the organization of a seminar in Tel Aviv in June 2010 on the topic "Western Canon in Digital Channels of Communication" and as well as the meeting of a workshop entitled the "Digital Narrative 2.0: Aesthetics and Criticism Beyond Literature" at the ICLA Congress in Seoul in August 2010. The report is unanimously approved

Alfons Knauth presents the report of his Committee on Cosmopolitanism and Polyglossia. For logistic reasons, the first virtual meeting of the committee will be organized during the month of December 2009. This meeting will serve to draw up a map of the metropolitan areas and major currents of multi-

lingualism. It will endeavor to offer a comparative vision of the principal paradigms of multi-lingual literature. The second meeting of the committee will be held in conjunction with the ICLA Congress in Seoul where a workshop entitled translation and multi-lingual literature will be organized. After a debate about the definition of the term multilingual, the report is approved unanimously.

The report of the activities of the translation committee sent in by John Milton is read in his absence. The report notes the fact that few colleagues have submitted proposals for the Congress in Seoul. The Executive Council regrets that the Committee cannot mention more activities but approves the report none the less.

The absence of Margaret Higonnet, the report on the gender studies committee is read by Monica Spiridon. The committee organized a workshop during the meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association in March 2009: "Queering Voices: Comparative Approaches to Voice/Gender Articulation." A session will as well be organized during the Congress in Seoul: "Gender, Nature, Cultural Difference." Margaret Higonnet has as well edited a special issue of the review *Comparative Critical Studies* devoted to the place of gender in the history of comparative literature. A volume based on the work presented during the Rio de Janeiro Congress will be published shortly with the title *Women and Translation* by the University of Ottawa Press. Jerrod Hayes, William Spurlin, and Margaret Higonnet continue their work on critical anthology entitled *Comparatively Queer*. The report is unanimously accepted by the executive Council, which also agrees to renew the mandate of the committee for a period of three years.

Robert Stockhammers reads a summary of the report of the activities of the Literary Theory Committee. A symposium was organized in June 2009 in Sydney on the theme "The Aestheticization of Emotion." A workshop will also be organized in Seoul with the title "Cosmopolitan Literature—Literary Theory in a World with Proliferating Frontiers." The work presented at the workshop "Ambiguity and



Disambiguation” during the Rio de Janeiro Congress will soon be published in the review *Neohelicon*. The proceedings of the Ljubljana and of the Sydney colloquia will also be published. After a terminological debate on the concept of comparative literature and of literary theory, the report was unanimously approved

Monica Spiridon presents the report of the activities of the Research Committee on Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The book *Nationality Building and the Breakup of the Empire: Balkan Literatures in the Era of Nationalism* was published in December 2000 by Bilgi University Press in Istanbul. The seventh colloquium of the Committee took place in Bratislava in May 2009 with the theme of “The ‘New Imagined Communities’: Identity Building up in Eastern and Southeastern Europe in a Globalizing Era.” The proceedings thereof will be published by the Slovak Academy of Sciences. The report is unanimously approved.

With regard to the presentation of the reports of the activities of the research committee, Manfred Schmeling thanks the various colleagues for their collaboration.

Third Session, 25 August 2009 9:00 a.m.

The session was opened at 9:00 a.m. by the President, Manfred Schmeling. Marc Maufort, the European secretary, reads his annual report. He stresses his involvement in the preparation of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Council in Bremen, his regular collaboration with the President, Manfred Schmeling, and the American secretary Steven Sondrup. As authorized by the ICLA executive Council in Bremen, he undertook the organization of the meeting of the executive Council at the Free University of Brussels in 2009. He also organized for this occasion a colloquium on the heritage of European literatures and cultures. The report was unanimously approved.

Steven Sondrup, the American secretary, then presents his report. He mentions his work on the preparation of the minutes, the organization of the agenda for the meeting in Brussels, the continual maintenance of the Association website, as well as the collection of the electronic addresses of the members. More than 2000 addresses are currently in his possession Steven Sondrup invites the Council members to encourage their different national and regional associations to send him the e-mail addresses of their members in order to facilitate this means of communication within the ICLA. He presents a diagram showing the percentage of members represented by the different regional and national associations. After having been in Korea in May 2009 in the company of the President, Steven Sondrup prepared and had printed a second circular with a call for papers. Although he was able to find the financial support that permitted the preparation and printing of the circular the cost of distribution will have to be paid in other ways

A debate, thus, arose about the way in which the postal costs should be handled; the cost is in excess of US\$8700. The general consensus was that this sum should be paid by the local organizers. They, however, explained that they did not have a sum of this magnitude available. After a long discussion, it was determined that the Association will lend the sum to the organizers until their budget permits them to reimburse the Association. Given this stipulation, the report was unanimously approved.

The three treasurers, Micaéla Symington, , Kano Takayo, and Ross Shideler present their financial reports. Micaéla Symington explains in summary form the various difficulties she encountered in the midst of the international financial crisis in trying to transfer ICLA fund from Lloyds of London to a French account in euros at the CIC bank. It was a question of carrying out a decision made during the meeting of the Executive Council in Bremen Micaéla Symington had to address an official letter of complaint to Lloyd's of London. In spite all of the losses occasioned by the depreciation of the pound sterling, the ICLA is still financially solvent. Finally Micaéla Symington recommends establishing the dues in Europe at €10. After

a debate concerning the necessity of this equalization, the president decides to examine the problem together with the Committee on Structures. Kano Takayo subsequently presents the financial report for Asia. Ross Shideler does the same with regard to the Americas. The reports of the treasurers are unanimously approved

John Burt Foster, the editor-in-chief of *Recherche littéraire*, reads his report. He explains the various financial difficulties with which he has been confronted. Although a subsidy from his university for *Recherche littéraire* was guaranteed through 2010, he requests that the financial support of the Association be paid before the the delivery of the review to the printer. He adds that it will be necessary to assure resumption of responsibility for the review by a university press beginning in 2011. He mentions that it will be necessary to consider a successor for him as editor-in-chief Dorothy Figueira adds in this regard that she has has made contact with North Carolina University Press. The executive Council encourages the continuation of negotiations. Dorothy Figueira adds that the executive Council will have to communicate its its opinion by electronic means concerning the proposition that the press will make. In so far as the choice of a new editor is concerned, it is appropriate that Manfred Schmeling, Steven Sondrup, and Dorothy Figueira make the necessary contacts. The report of John Burt Foster is unanimously accepted.

Steven Sondrup presents his report in his capacity as editor of the association's *Bulletin*. He proposes that from now on the availability of the Bulletin on the Association web site be announced by means of an RSS feed. A demonstration of this procedure is offered for the benefit of the Executive Council Steven Sondrup adds that the members of the Association will be informed of the means by which it will be necessary to subscribe to the new RSS feed in order to receive it. Steven Sondrup requests a subvention of US\$2000 in order to assure the establishment of this new method of distribution to report and the financial request are unanimously approved

Dorothy Figueira presents the report of the Anna Balkian Prize Committee. She mentions that the deadline for the reception of the manuscripts is set for the month of December 2009. Up to this point just a single submission has been received. She suggests that an e-mail be sent to all the members in order to remind them of the requirements of the prize. She also think that it would be appropriate to think about means of augmenting the capital endowment of the fund. The report is approved  
unanimously

Steven Sondrup explains the problem of the Tania Carvalhal Memorial Travel Fund whose minimal capital endowment is at risk of being absorbed by banking expenses. He proposes, therefore, that the funds be transferred to the Balakian Prize. This proposition is unanimously approved.

Fourth Session, 25 August 2009, 2:00 p.m.

During the resumption of discussion, Jean-Marc Moura summarizes the activity of the Program Committee for the Seoul conference. He explains in detail the complex work of the six subcommittees which were part of the program committee. Jean-Marc Moura mentions the excellent collaboration with the Korean organizers—Sung-Won Cho and Ashley Kim—from which he has benefited. Anders Petterson stresses the necessity of adopting selection criteria that are sufficiently broad. The question of knowing when the new deadline for the acceptance of submissions should be established given the large number of abstracts already submitted up to this point is raised. It is decided that the absolute deadline will be 15 September 2009. Having made this stipulation, the report of Jean-Mark Moura is accepted  
unanimously.

Our colleague Sung-Won Cho subsequently describes in detail the progress of the preparations for the Congress in 2010 in Seoul. The executive Council congratulates the organizers for their work and approves the report unanimously.

The following point in the agenda calls for an examination of the proposal for the ICLA Congress in 2013. The proposal coming from the University of Paris IV Sorbonne has been prepared by Professor Jean-Yves Masson in collaboration with Prof. Anne Tomiche, the president of the French Comparative Literature Association. The theme proposed for the Congress is Comparative as a Critical Approach. Anne Tomiche and Jean-Yves Masson, invited by the executive Council to present the proposal, also provide details concerning the logistic organization envisioned for the Congress. The proposal has received the official support of the University of Paris IV. During the debate that follows, it emerges that the last fifteen days of the month of July are the best for the organization of the Congress. The executive Council enthusiastically accepts this proposal, which will be recommended for the approval of the General Assembly of the ICLA during the Congress in Seoul. The proposal is approved by a majority of the members of the executive Council.

The following point concerns the dates of the next meeting of the executive Council of the ICLA Professor Cho indicates that the meeting of the Executive Council will take place immediately before the Congress in Seoul, the 13th and 14 August 2010, the location of the meeting remaining to be determined. This proposition is approved unanimously.

Eduardo Coutinho subsequently makes a report on the publication of the proceedings of the Rio de Janeiro Congress. The proceedings will be published in the form of three volumes respectively entitled *Continuities and Displacements*, *Crossings and Contaminations*, and *Identities in Process*. Steven Sondrup congratulates Eduardo Coutinho for the speed with which the proceedings have been published, which is set without precedent in the history of the Association

In conclusionm Theo D'Haen mentions the possibility for the ICLA requesting a subsidy from FILLM, which is confirmed Anders Petterson.

The president, Manfred Schmeling, closes the meeting of the Executive Council of the ICLA after thanking all the colleagues for their collaboration.