

Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages

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Marcel Cornis-Pope, President

REPORT of the Coordinating Committee for the COMPARATIVE HISTORY OF LITERATURES IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

Submitted by Marcel Cornis-Pope, President of CHLEL

Date: June 6, 2014, revised July 21, 2014

Members of CHLEL:

Marcel Cornis-Pope (Virginia Commonwealth University), President
Theo D'haen (Leuven University), Vice-President
César Domínguez Prieto (University of Santiago de Compostela), Secretary
Vivian Liska (Antwerp University), Treasurer
Kjersti Bale (University of Oslo)
Robert Dixon (University of Sydney)
Dirk Göttsche (University of Nottingham)
Patrizia Lombardo (Université de Genève)
Thomas Nolden (Wellesley College)
Thomas Pavel (University of Chicago))
Karen-Margrethe Simonsen (Aarhus University)
Franca Sinopoli (University of Rome)
Steven Sondrup (Brigham Young University)
Francesco Stella (University of Siena)
Anja Tippner (Hamburg University)
Robert Weninger (King's College, London)

I am pleased to report on the activities of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages from July 15, 2013, when the Committee met in Paris, to July 21st, 2014. This period includes also our Committee meeting (June 16-17th) in Aix en Provence, France. We thank Fridrun Rinner for hosting our business meeting and Conference at the University Aix Marseille, as well as Crystel Pinçonat and Alexis Nuselovici for helping with the necessary arrangements for our Conference on June 18th through June 21st.

1) Financial Report.

At the last Coordinating Committee meeting in Paris, our Treasurer Vivian Liska reported a balance of 22.098,13 €. In May 2014, an ICLA subsidy of € 6000 was transferred to our Coordinating Committee account. We thank very much the ICLA for continuing its support of our publication program. Reimbursements to the Iberia project amounted to almost € 6,700, and readers' fees for the Media project amounted to € 643.

In Spring 2013, we learned that the 2,500 € previously allocated by the UAI to CHLEL had lapsed, since there had been no expenses submitted to the Treasurer. Theo D'haen agreed to serve as a liaison to the Assembly but was unable to attend the 2013 meeting. Theo D'haen, however, worked very hard to secure from UAI a restoration of those funds with the documentation provided by the former President of CHLEL, Margaret Higonnet. Thus, payments by the UAI were in December 2013 and February 2014.

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At the meeting of the UAI Assembly in Mainz our quinquennial report submitted in December 2012 was accepted with felicitations. On the next round of reports to the UAI, the CHLEL president will need to apply for a renewed subsidy.

A full CHLEL Treasurer's Report for the period July 1, 2013-May 19, 2014 (submitted by our treasurer, Vivian Liska on May 19, 2014) is available upon request.

During the next months we expect project directors to request help in covering costs of translation and copy-editing. Our procedures are governed by requirements of the UAI and similar rules of the ICLA regarding subsidies, whereby original documentation of expenditures is submitted before reimbursement. In the past, routine modest costs such as xeroxing, copy-editing, translation, indexing, and permissions for illustrations have been reimbursed. Such expenses have had a ceiling of \$2,000 per volume, with a possible additional 600 euros for further costs. Directors now are facing high costs for translation and copy-editing, at multiples of those allocations. At the same time traditional sources of funding have dried up. We, therefore, respectfully request ICLA to grant us an annual subsidy of \$3,000 for the period 2014-2016.

2) Publications with Benjamins.

At the July 17, 2013 meeting of the Executive Council of ICLA in Paris, Margaret Higonnet and I delivered a report on the activities of the Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of the Literatures in European Languages. We stated that there had been many positive reviews of the volumes published by the Committee. We also noted that the five-year report of the International Academic Union on the activities of the Committee was very favorable. Many projects are making great progress, leading to some major expenses for translation, indexing, and editing in 2013-14.

Regarding the various publications projects that the Coordinating Committee has sponsored recently, the Benjamins website provides blurbs and selective Google views of our volumes. Sets of volumes can now be bought at a discount and all volumes can be purchased in digital form. The volumes devoted to the *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* continue to garner reviews, which have been posted separately on the CHLEL site. *L'époque de la Renaissance*, vol. III, *Maturations et mutations (1520-1560)*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011, was recently reviewed by Toni Veneri in *Semicerchio* 1-2 (2013): 245-47. Earlier reviews can be found at the website under "Comparative Literature History Series," where each title appears, followed by links to the reviews. See <http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.CHLEL>

Our ten current projects continue to make significant progress, as directors gather contributions, translate, and copy-edit them. One volume in the "problem" series has been favorably reviewed by two external specialists and one member of the Coordinating Committee and is currently at press. Entitled *New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression: Crossing Borders, Crossing Genres*, this volume edited by Marcel Cornis-Pope is 770 double-spaced pages long and covers a broad range of topics (literature and other media such as film, visual art, digital work, sound work, etc.) and geocultural areas (Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East, the Orient, Africa and the Americas).

Other book manuscripts that are in advanced stage, some ready to be reviewed by our committee and designated external readers are: the first volume of *A Comparative History of Nordic Cultures* focused on "Scopes and Practices" and edited by Steven P. Sondrup and Mark B. Sandberg; vol. 2 of this project will be assembled during 2014. The second volume of A

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Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula, edited by César Domínguez Prieto, Anxo Abuín, and Ellen Sapega, will hopefully be completed in the Fall of 2014. By the end of the summer 2014 we will also receive a full draft of the *Orality Project* as a challenge to comparative literary history, coedited by Daniel Chamberlain and J. Edward Chamberlin. This project will be reviewed by external evaluators and by our Committee in the latter months of 2014.

Other projects in different stages of elaboration include: César Domínguez Prieto's *Medieval Comparatism / Comparatist Medievalism*; this project has been delayed because of César's work on the Iberian project. Fridrun Rinner and Franca Sinopoli have solicited position papers for the transnational project on *Migration and Literature in Europe in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century* and have collected abstracts for the case studies section of their volume. In December 2014, the editors and members of this research group will meet at Sapienza University (Rome-Italy) to discuss the collected articles and to organize the peer review process. They hope to have a final discussion of this volume in the early part of 2015 and submit the volume for review and publication in the summer of 2015. Also targeted for completion in 2015 is the first volume of the *History of Transatlantic Literatures in European Languages in the 20th Century*, edited by Jean Marc Moura. Two more volumes are in advanced stage of conceptualization: *La Nouvelle Cultures* (Renaissance II), edited by Eva Kushner and Conrad Eisenbichler, has most articles in place but some are still pending or in early draft. *Conceptualizing European Literature(s)*, volume edited by Vivian Liska and Thomas Nolden has gone through several reconceptualizations, not unusual for a volume meant for our problem series. In similar ways, another volume targeted for the problem series, focused on realism redefined and edited by a team that includes Margaret Higonnet, Dirk Götsche, and Patrizia Lombardo, is currently undergoing a significant overhaul of its conceptual structure. Following numerous preparatory panels, a detailed outline for the project on "Landscapes of Realism" was drawn up at a meeting organized in London by committee members Robert Weninger and Patrizia Lombardo, who summarized the premises and goals of the volumes proposed. The realism steering committee submitted this outline to CHLEL; it was presented at the meeting by Dirk Götsche. Concurrently several papers were read at the Aix en Provence Conference in June 2014 on a panel chaired by Cornis-Pope; this panel extended its attention to later avatars of realism through the twentieth century (surrealism, neorealism, socialist realism). The Committee voted to approve this proposal in a motion that states "The Committee is impressed with the proposal on Reconsidering Realism(s) and approves the suggested conceptual framework and course of action, beginning with the planned conference in January 2015. We understand that the working committee that has developed the most recent version of the Realism proposal, presented to us in Aix en Provence, is ready to move forward and develop fully this publication project. The Coordinating Committee offers its full support to this project and its successful completion."

A listing of our current projects is now posted on our web site at <<http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.CHLEL&n=76849>>. Detailed descriptions of each project are posted at <<http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.CHLEL&n=115749>>. Manuscripts must be print-ready by August, in order to appear the same year.

3) Website and Editorial Review

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The website maintained at the University of Antwerp by our Treasurer Vivian Liska and her excellent assistant Jan Morrens effectively supports the work of the committee. The “members only” section contains ongoing editorial information such as guidelines for editors, project reports and comments, planning information about our annual meetings, and the history of the committee’s work (minutes and annual reports by the president, secretary, and treasurer). On the public face of the website, visitors can find our mission statement, links to the publications by Benjamins together with links to book reviews, a list of committee members, and the by-laws of the committee. In addition, the outgoing Secretary Svend Erik Larsen has gathered and posted short descriptions of each current project to make our ongoing work more accessible.

4) Committee Elections for 2013-2016

Secretary Svend Erik Larsen chaired our election committee and conducted the ballot, including a second round after one of the newly-elected members withdrew. We have thanked him as well as Linda Hutcheon and Sandra Bermann for their work as nominators and scrutineers, and have welcomed the six new members who joined us last year..

The current committee, effective at the end of our meeting on July 15, 2013, will serve between 2013 – 2016. The new Coordinating Committee owes a world of debt and gratitude to the outgoing officers of the Coordinating Committee: President Margaret R. Higonnet, Secretary Svend Erik Larsen, as well as members Angela Esterhammer, Inocência Mata, Anders Pettersson, and Fridrun Rinner. I would also like to thank the current officers of our organization – Vice President Theo D’haen, Secretary César Domínguez Prieto, and Treasurer Vivian Liska for their many contributions to the planning and managing of our publication projects. Their imagination and hard work have ensured that our publications continue to make an impact in the field of literary, cultural, and media studies.

5) Committee Meeting in 2015

Our 2015 Coordinating Committee Meeting and Conference will take place in Siena, Italy, on June 10th and 11th, followed by a conference on June 12th-13th. Organized by Francesco Stella, the conference will be focused primarily (but not only) on the interaction of literature with electronic media, and the digitalization of both literature and criticism.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcel Cornis-Pope, President (2013-2016)

Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages