



REELC/ENCLS 2011 Biennial report from the General Coordinator

ICLA 2010

From 15-21 August 2010, REELC/ENCLS was present at the XIXth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association in Seoul, South-Korea, with a panel on “Comparative Literature, Europe(s), the World: Legacies and Perspectives”, presided by the former General Coordinators Lucia Boldrini and Nele Bemong. It gave us the opportunity to create a lot more visibility for our European Network. We thank Manfred Schmeling, former president of the ICLA, for helping us get into the program at the last minute.

FILLM

One result of our presence in Seoul was that FILLM, the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures, which had its business meeting during the Seoul conference, has proposed to our Network to become a member. FILLM is the official international body that represents the study of language and literature as research-based scholarly disciplines in universities and tertiary higher education institutions world-wide. FILLM is part of the UNESCO pyramid of international associations which seek to represent intellectual and cultural endeavour on a global basis. All information on FILLM, its mission and strategy, its committee, its current members, etc. can be found on their website <http://www.fillm.ulg.ac.be/>. Current members include organisations such as the ICLA and the MLA, but also smaller organisations such as the International Association for Hungarian Studies). Membership of FILLM would be an excellent opportunity for the REELC/ENCLS, but there is a catch to it. In FILLM, there are two 'streams of money' involved: one from top to bottom, so from UNESCO, via FILLM, to the individual membership organizations, but also one from bottom to top, where the individual members need to pay a yearly fee to FILLM. The amount of that fee is determined on the basis of the number of members of the organisations. FILLM secretary-general Anders Petterson has told us that if our enquiry for membership would have a positive outcome, the fee will be determined by the FILLM Bureau. We have explained to the secretary-general that ENCLS-members do not have to pay a yearly contribution, and that as such, we don't have any 'income'. They will take this fact into account when discussing our possible membership, but we might still be asked for a contribution anyway. In that case, there are a number of possible scenario's, which we have already discussed among the Exec. Committee.

Option 1. We could start charging yearly membership fees for Network-membership. This is probably something we want to avoid, though; we have always said that we want to keep Network membership fee-free for as long as possible. The issues of fees is complicated by the fact that we would need to establish an account in a (European) country - with whose fiscal laws we'd have to comply - and then the treasurer might need to be always based there, or at least initially until things are properly set up to be dealt with by telephone and internet banking. (In this case, it would probably make most sense to have it in a Eurozone country). The other question is how to collect the fees - it would be possible to add a few euros to our conference registration fees, but members that do not attend a conference would lose their membership unless we set up a payment system.

Option 2. We may be able to do this without introducing regular yearly compulsory membership fees for our members: If we were able to negotiate a smallish yearly fee for FILLM, we might simply add a very small sum to our congress fees (say 1 or 2 euro's per person) and use that money only for this purpose, and continue not to charge membership fees for anything else. Or we could do this more openly and ask members, when they register, to tick a box where they donate a small sum (it could be a single euro or left to the discretion of

the member) towards our fund for FILLM membership. Any money on top of what we need might be devolved to helping graduates or colleagues that find the expense prohibitive, or kept for future years.

The Exec. Committee is in favour of the idea not to impose regular yearly membership fees, and just add a small sum to our conference fees.

Option 3. There is also a possibility where the membership fee initially might be drawn from a private fund instituted for the purposes of promoting intellectual and academic activities. In order to make sure that fund doesn't run dry, we could ask delegates at the biennial conferences (probably starting at the next conference in Madeira) to make a small donation (a few euro's) to keep the registration going and not deplete the fund entirely too quickly. There would be a number of possible ways of doing this: we could ask for a small supplement from future conference delegates, of one or two euros; we could also make it optional and explain that it is for this purpose, if we want to be entirely transparent. Or it could also be done as a literal "donation box" at the registration desk, with an explanation of its purpose. In case this option would be chosen, we would have to decide who will collect the money and make the payment since we do not have an official treasurer, and asking a different person (the one that happens to be the congress organiser) each time that we need to make the payment may be a bit chaotic. Lucia Boldrini has already proposed to take that task upon herself, if it is acceptable to the Exec Committee and the General Meeting that she would do so as an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

For the Executive Committee, this last option is the most preferable one, the first option the least preferable one.

In October, the FILLM Bureau will meet in Halden, and during that meeting, the question whether REELC/ENCLS could successfully apply for membership in FILLM will be raised by Pettersson. He will then get back to us with the Bureau's answer, and – if this is a positive answer – with the membership fee amount. At this point, we would like the General Meeting to express itself on whether the Exec Committee is empowered to make a decision (as it is likely to involve paying money) once Anders Petterssen tells us what the FILLM Bureau has decided, without needing to seek again the General Assembly's permission.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

1. REGIONAL MODERATORS

A number of Regional Moderators had already been appointed in the previous years, but more are still needed from regions/languages that are still unrepresented. Regional Moderators can help by disseminating information about REELC/ENCLS in their areas, and post on the website information and announcements about events, publications, positions, etc. in their area. The Executive Committee will appoint a Coordinator of Regional Moderators to ensure that the circulation of information is effective.

2. SELF-ARCHIVING

In September 2009 we also started with a Self-Archiving module on our website, which enables network members to self-archive any of their articles on the REELC/ENCLS website and make them available to other members.

(see <http://reelc.net/?q=forum/self-archiving-reelcencs-presentation-11-september-2009> for an explanation by our webmaster Ales Vaupotic and http://reelc.net/files/help_on_self-archiving.pdf for guidelines on self-archiving on our website). All network members are encouraged to keep self-archiving their papers and articles!

3. REELC/ENCLS Comp Lit Bibliography 2000- Project

In June 2010 the REELC/ENCLS has launched a project to create a bibliography devoted to theory, methodology and criticism in comparative literature since 2000. All members of the network were and are still invited to participate in this project. Editor of the bibliography, which is compiled through our website, is Olga Romanova. The goal of the project is to create a bibliography that provides maximum information and will be useful to scholars and students working in the field of comparative literature. This bibliography has a threefold aim: it should allow a better understanding of the new trends in our discipline, provide a glimpse of the prospects of its development and establish contacts between scholars, not only in Europe but

worldwide. Initially, we want to limit this bibliography to monographs, edited volumes, conference proceedings, special issues of magazines and general articles published in specialized journals. For the moment, we exclude unpublished lectures, interviews and articles in general, non-specialized periodicals. The publications to be listed in our bibliography relate to general aspects of comparative literature (with the aim of composing a kind of "meta-theory" of our discipline): its history, its methods, its major research areas, its recent development, its position in the field of social sciences, etc. The languages used in all communications about the bibliography are English and French, but obviously, books in all languages will be listed.

On the REELC/ENCLS website, you will find an electronic form that you may use to provide information for this bibliography. Or you can contact Olga Romanova at ollga_roman@rambler.ru.

4. FINANCIAL SITUATION

Up til now, our Slovenian colleagues from ZRC-SAZU have been extremely helpful and generous in hosting our website and financially taking care of it. Due to the ongoing financial crisis in the Academic world, we should however start thinking about what happens if the Academy in Slovenia stops the funding? Applying for EU or other funds is presenting itself as necessary at this point, but we also need to consider the option that we may not get any funds, and even if we were successful it may be for a short time, or for less money than is needed. Therefore we should start exploring the option as well – together with your Slovenian colleagues – whether the website can be transferred to another institution.

TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE PROJECT

At our last conference in Vilnius, in September 2009, Marko Juvan took the initiative to distribute a questionnaire about the possibilities of collaborative research among REELC/ENCLS members, with the aim of increasing transnational research collaboration among REELC/ENCLS individual and institutional members. The results were later posted on our website (where they can still be viewed). People who are interested in starting up transnational research collaborations are warmly invited to take a look at these pages on our website, on the Forum-page.

CONFERENCES IN COLLABORATION WITH REELC/ENCLS

Apart from our biennial conferences, the REELC/ENCLS also wants to (help) organize other conferences. On 25-26 November 2010, together with the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association and the ZRC SAZU Institute for Slovenian Literature and Literary Studies, we organized an international conference entitled: "The Book: An Economy of Cultural Spaces" in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2010 capital of the book. We welcome more suggestions for co-operations of this kind.

NEW COMP LIT BABY

In September 2009, shortly after our last congress in Vilnius, we had the chance to welcome a new Comp Lit Organisation, as the Ukrainian Association for Comparative Literature was born.

GENERAL COORDINATOR ELECT

Marina Grishakova was elected by the EC as General Coordinator Elect, and is proposed as the EC's official candidate for the function of General Coordinator for the following term.

FIFTH BIENNIAL CONGRESS

The Fifth Biennial Congress of the REELC/ENCLS will be organised in Madeira in 2013. Teresa Nascimento is the contact person for this event.