

THE BRITISH COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1. Name of Association

The British Comparative Literature Association (founded 1975).

2. Objects of the Association

The Association aims to promote the scholarly study of literature without confinement to national, cultural or linguistic boundaries, and in relation to other disciplines. Through its publications, conferences and other activities the Association:

- encourages research along comparative, intercultural and interdisciplinary lines, as well as in the fields of general literary studies, translation and literary theory.
- fosters the exchange and renewal of critical ideas and concepts.
- keeps its members informed about national and international developments in the study of literature.
- provides a forum for personal and institutional academic contacts, both within Britain and with Associations and individuals in other countries.

3. What the Association may do

The Association may do anything lawful to promote its objects, including the use of the following powers:

- (i) to promote, encourage or undertake study or research and disseminate the results.
- (ii) to produce, print or publish anything in written, oral, visual or electronic media in furtherance of its objects.
- (iii) to organize lectures, conferences, receptions, workshops and other activities in furtherance of its objects.
- (iv) to raise funds, invite and receive contributions or grants or enter into contracts, seek subscriptions or raise moneys in any other way.
- (v) to provide or procure the provision of services, training, consultancy, advice, support or guidance in furtherance of its objects.
- (vi) to employ and pay any professional advisors or partners in collaborative ventures where appropriate.
- (vii) to advertise and promote the Association's activities.
- (viii) to establish support or collaboration with any institutions, Societies, Associations whose objects are similar to the Association's own.
- (ix) to open and operate bank accounts or other banking facilities and to give an indemnity to banks and other financial institutions in respect of Direct Debit operations.
- (x) to enter into arrangements with any governments, authorities, or any person, Society or Association necessary to promote the Association's objects.

4. Use of Income

The income of the Association shall be applied only towards the promotion of its objects and no part shall be paid directly or indirectly by way of profit to members of the Association and no member of the Executive Committee may be appointed to any office of the Association paid by salary or fees or receive any remuneration except as shown below under 'Permitted Payments'.

5. Permitted Payments

The Association may pay:

- (i) reasonable and proper payments to any individual advisor, collaborator or assistant who is not a member of the Executive Committee for any services to the Association.
- (ii) reasonable out-of-pocket expenses to a member of the Executive Committee acting in that capacity, on the production of receipts.
- (iii) reasonable and proper payment for the hire of premises for any of the Association's activities.
- (iv) reasonable and proper payment to other institutions, publishers or other bodies for services related to the pursuit of the Association's activities.
- (v) exceptional payments with the permission of the Executive Committee.

6. Winding up of the Association

If the Association is wound up or dissolved, the assets must be transferred to other Associations that have similar objects to the Association, as appropriate.

7. Members

- (i) The number of members is unlimited.
- (ii) Membership is by subscription which is subject to revision at each General Meeting.
- (iii) The Association must keep a database of members showing name, address and date of membership.
- (iv) The list of members may be employed for the promotion of the Association's objects.
- (v) The Association may admit to Honorary Membership any individuals who have rendered outstanding services to the Association. Honorary members will have full voting rights.

8. Ending of membership

Membership ends when:

- (i) a member resigns or dies.
- (ii) if membership subscription remains unpaid six months after it is due and due notice has been given to the member.
- (iii) Membership may be suspended by giving due notice in writing to the member concerned. A member may appeal against this decision.

9. Payment of Subscriptions

The annual subscription to the Association shall be determined by the Executive Committee and presented to the membership for ratification at a General Meeting. It shall include subscription to the Association's journal and any other benefits that may be agreed from time to time by the Executive Committee. It shall normally be payable in advance on 1 January each year.

10. Make-up of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- (i) Elected Officers: the Elected Officers of the Association shall be the President, an Honorary Secretary, and a Treasurer. They shall be elected at a General Meeting to hold office for a period of three years. They shall be eligible for re-election for a further two consecutive periods of three years. The Executive Committee reserves the right to make recommendations to the membership at a General Meeting. Elected Officers shall be members of the Association. The immediate past President shall be a member of the Executive Committee *ex officio*.
- (ii) Appointed Officers: the Appointed Officers (who may also already be members of the Executive Committee or co-opted members) shall be the General Editor of the Association's journal (see Note 1) and any co-editors or guest editors, the Officers overseeing the management of such organs and activities of the Association as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee (see Notes 2 and 3), and the Web Manager. They shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for a period not exceeding five years. Appointed members shall be members of the Association.
- (iii) Up to twelve other Executive Committee members, who shall be elected at a General Meeting of the Association for a period of three years. They shall be eligible for re-election for two further consecutive periods of three years. A member who has already served three terms on the Committee may be elected to the Committee at a later date. The Executive Committee reserves the right to present nominations to the General Meeting. All members of the Executive Committee shall be members of the Association.
- (iv) Up to two postgraduate representatives who shall be elected at a General Meeting for a period normally of three years. They shall be actively involved in promoting the Association's activities to the graduate community and in the organization of graduate workshops, receptions and conferences. The Executive Committee reserves the right to present nominations to the General Meeting. Graduate members shall be members of the Association.
- (v) Individuals may be co-opted to the Committee for a specified period of time as appropriate in the pursuit of the Association's objects.
- (vi) No-one may stand for Elected Officer or Elected Member unless either the nomination is made to a General Meeting by the Executive Committee or a written nomination has been received by the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days prior to a General Meeting. Such a nomination must be seconded by at least one other member and accompanied by a statement of the nominee's willingness to stand.

- (vii) The Executive Committee may appoint anyone to fill an occasional vacancy in the Committee membership. The person appointed will hold office until the next General Meeting and will be eligible for re-election.

11. Re-election or Retirement of Members of the Executive Committee

Notice of intention to stand for re-election or to retire from the Executive Committee should be given to the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days prior to a General Meeting.

12. Ending of Executive Committee membership

If a member of the Executive Committee fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without good cause, the Committee may resolve that their membership of the Committee be ended. The member must be given at least 7 days notice of the decision and may appeal within 14 days.

13. The remit of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee manages the business of the Association, including the organization of the triennial international conference, and may use all the powers of the Association which are not required to be ratified at a General Meeting of the membership.

14. Meetings of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee meets a minimum of three times a year (usually in January, May and September). Further meetings may be held if necessary for the furtherance of the Association's objects.

15. Quorum

A quorum must be at least a third of the membership of the Executive Committee.

16. Chair of Executive Committee meetings

The Chair of Executive Committee meetings shall normally be the President, or, if s/he is unable to be present, any other member of the Executive Committee nominated by the President.

17. The Keeping of Minutes

The Executive Committee must keep Minutes of:

- (i) the names of the members of the Executive Committee present at each of its meetings and of apologies for absence.
- (ii) all appointments of Officers by the Executive Committee.
- (iii) all resolutions and decisions made at meetings of the Executive Committee.

18. Voting and decisions

Questions discussed at the meeting must be decided by general agreement or by a majority of votes of the members present. The President shall, if necessary, have the casting vote.

19. Delegation of Executive Committee's powers

- (i) Business of the Executive Committee may be delegated to a sub-committee of the Executive Committee where appropriate. A sub-committee must conform to any requirements or regulations that the Executive Committee imposes upon it.
- (ii) The members of the sub-committee may co-opt any person or people to serve on the sub-committee with the agreement of the Executive Committee or elected Officers.
- (iii) All acts and proceedings of the sub-committee must be reported to the Executive Committee as soon as possible.

20. Chair of Sub-Committee

A sub-committee may elect a Chair of its meetings if the Executive Committee does not nominate one.

21. Payment of reasonable expenses to members of the Executive Committee

Members of the Executive Committee may be paid reasonable out-of-pocket expenses that have been properly incurred in connection with attendance at meetings or in pursuit of other business of the Association, on the production of receipts.

22. Cheques, receipts, etc

All cheques and receipts shall indicate the name of the Association in full. Cheques shall be signed by at least one of the designated Executive Committee Officers.

23. General meetings

General Meetings shall normally be held at the triennial international conference. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at any other time. At least 21 days notice must be given to the membership, specifying the date, time and place of the meeting together with full details of the business. A member of the Association may propose an item for the agenda by writing to the Secretary well in advance of the General meeting.

24. Quorum

- (i) Business may be done at a General meeting only if a quorum of members is present at the start of the meeting. A quorum is 20 members present in person or by proxy.
- (ii) If there is no quorum at the General Meeting, the meeting will be adjourned until a later date, or deemed to be quorate with permission of the majority of the members present.
- (iii) A member may appoint a proxy by nominating the person in writing to the Honorary Secretary in advance of the General Meeting.

25. Chair of the General Meeting

The General Meeting should be chaired by the President, or if s/he is unable to attend, by his or her representative as agreed by the Executive Committee.

26. Minutes of General Meetings

The Minutes of the previous General Meeting shall be tabled at the General Meeting. The Minutes shall be made available on the BCLA web site.

27. Voting

Every member of the Association has one vote, including the Chair. If the votes are level, the Chair has the casting vote. The declaration by the Chair that a resolution has been carried by a majority vote, or lost on a show of hands is final, and will be entered as such in the Minutes.

28. Association publications and activities

- (i) The Association shall own the house journal (see Note 1). The editorial responsibility for the journal shall rest with the General Editor and an Editorial Board. The General Editor and any Co-Editors appointed by the Executive Committee are Appointed Officers of the Association. The Executive Committee reserves the right to nominate members of the Editorial Board.
- (ii) The Executive Committee has the power to organize conferences, lectures and workshops and to establish and collaborate in the maintenance of such organs as a competition, a series of books in the field of comparative literature and other activities appropriate to its concerns (see Notes 2 and 3). It may appoint other committees or bodies as and when may be required for the management of such activities.

29. Accounts

- (i) The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping accounts of the Association's financial affairs and shall present a written report to each meeting of the Executive Committee of all amounts spent and received by the Association.
- (ii) A statement of the Association's financial position shall be presented to the membership at each General Meeting.
- (iii) The Association's accounts will be audited from time to time as and when the Executive Committee decides.

30. Reports of other Appointed Officers

Appointed Officers responsible for administering the Association's activities shall present a written statement of progress, and accounts, if appropriate, to each Executive Committee meeting and to the General meeting.

31. The British Comparative Literature Association website

- (i) The British Comparative Literature Association website shall be administered by the Web Manager, appointed by the Executive Committee. The Web Manager shall report to each meeting of the Executive Committee and shall implement decisions made about the appearance, content and management of the website.
- (ii) Details of all the Association's regular activities are made available on the website (see Note 3).

32. Dissolution of the Association

The Executive Committee or a General Meeting may propose at any time to dissolve the Association. Three months notice of a General Meeting should be given to all members in the event of a motion to dissolve the Association with six months grace, after receipt of notice, to lodge an objection.

This Constitution revises and updates the original Constitution of the British Comparative Literature Association of 1977. It was approved by the membership of the Association at the General meeting held on 6 July 2010. Any subsequent revisions must be proposed to and approved by a later General Meeting.

Notes

1. This is currently *Comparative Critical Studies* (currently published by Edinburgh University Press). Members of the Association receive all issues of the journal as part of their subscription. Issues can also be read online by members via the Association's website. Issues of the former house journal, *New Comparison*, can be viewed online by members of the Association via the British Comparative Literature website. The Association also formerly shared responsibility for *Comparative Criticism*, published by Cambridge University Press.
2. Members of the Executive Committee are currently appointed to serve on the Publications Committee of the *Legenda* monographs in Comparative Literature, currently owned by Maney Publishing and the MHRA.
3. Activities currently managed by the Executive Committee are the organization of a triennial international conference, regular workshop conferences, collaborative conferences with other Associations, graduate receptions and conferences, the John Dryden Translation Prize (jointly with the British Centre for Literary Translation) and the Malcolm Bowie Memorial Lecture.