

ICLA Research Development Committee
Report to the Executive Council
June 2025

Membership of the Committee: Prof Matthew Reynolds (Chair – Oxford University); Prof Sowon Park (Secretary – University of California, Santa Barbara); Dr Baba Badji (ISGRJ, Rutgers, Early Career Member); Prof. Rosinka Chaudhuri (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta); Prof. Anne Duprat (Université de Picardie Jules Verne); Prof. Toshiko Ellis (University of Tokyo) Prof. Alessandro Grilli (Università di Pisa); Prof. May Hawas (University of Cambridge); Prof. Paolo Horta (NYU Abu Dhabi); Prof. Marko Juvan (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences); Dr Eugenia Kelbert-Rudan (Institute of World Literature, Slovak Academy of Sciences, and University of East Anglia); Prof. Tong King Lee (University of Hong Kong); Prof. Wen-Chin Ouyang (SOAS, University of London).

Report

1. Research Committees. Following the creation of two new short-term research committees and a new standing research committee in 2024, this has been a quiet year for RDC. It is hoped that further proposals for new committees will emerge from the Seoul convention: RDC's Chair and other members will be on the lookout for possibilities to nurture. Here is the current status of our Research Committees, for noting:

Short-Term Research Committees

Literature, Arts and Media (CLAM) [renewed for its 3rd and final term 2024]

Comparative African Literatures [approved 2019; in 2022 EC agreed that the official start date for this committee should be that of its first meeting, which according to CAL's report to EC last year took place in 2024. So this committee's date for first consideration for renewal will be 2027.]

Digital Comparative Literature [founded 2024]

Language Contact in Literature: Europe [founded 2024]

Standing Research Committees

The Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages Series (CHLEL) [founded 1967]

The Research Committee on Literary Theory [founded 1985]

The Comparative Gender Studies Research Committee [founded 2004]

The ICLA Standing Research Committee on South Asian Literatures and Cultures [founded 2016]. It continues the work of the former, short-term committee on Literary and Cultural Interrelationships Between India, Its Neighboring Countries and the World [2011]

Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies [converted from a short-term committee 2021]. Continues the work of the short-term committee of the same name, founded in 2011.

Translation [founded 2012]

Comparative History of East Asian Literatures [founded 2014]

Comics Studies and Graphic Narrative [converted from short-term committee 2022]

Religion, Ethics and Literature [converted from short-term committee 2024]

Arabic Comparative Literature [founded 2024]

2. ICLA Research Lecture. Following a meeting with Research Committee Chairs convened by the President of the ICLA, the Chair of RDC was asked to oversee the process by which Research Committees would suggest people to be invited to give the first ICLA Research Lecture and establish an order of preference. For 2025-6, the Committee on Arabic Comparative Literature proposed the following as their first choice:

[Nouri Gana](#) 'Melancholy of the Oppressed: Kanafani *avec* Fanon'. Preferred period: 2025-26
Online 45' lecture (+ response + Q&A)

And the Committee on Digital Comparative Literature proposed the following as their first choice:

[Karina van Dalen-Oskam](#) .The topic for her lecture would be the project [The Riddle of Literary Quality](#) and its UK follow-up project [Novel Perceptions](#).
She would be available for an online 45' lecture (+ response + Q&A) at any convenient time (for example, in the months of November or February/March), preferably on a Wednesday, or Tuesday/Thursday between 9 and 21 CE(S)T.

The Chairs of Research Committees were then invited to express their preference by email and a total of two votes were received, one for each speaker.

The Chair of RDC therefore suggests the following:

- That EC decide which of these two potential speakers be invited to give the 2025-26 ICLA Research Lecture.
- That, for future years, Research Committees be asked to propose speakers in their annual reports to EC, with the choice being made at the annual EC meeting.

For noting: The Research Committee on Literary Theory also proposed a speaker, [Tamás Ábel](#), who would speak on 'New Paths in the Study of Acrostics and Telestichs in Latin Literature', but who would only be available after June 2026.

MR 6/6/2025