

Modernity; Literary Theory; and Translation Studies. The Council, the members of which have working bases in some two dozen different cultures, is now headed by the distinguished scholar Koji Kawamoto (Tokyo). As mentioned, the next congress will be located in Hong Kong. Since the congress of 2000 was held in Africa, the congress of 2006 will likely take place in either the New World or Europe. Where to hold a future congress is one of the most important matters which the General Assembly decides by ballot.

One characteristic of AILC/ICLA has been reinforced decade by decade through the activities of a myriad of concerned individuals. By the truly impressive breadth of its critical and theoretical efforts, AILC/ICLA has converted into an attractive reality the famous 'prophetic' opening paragraph of Henry Remak's essay 'Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function' (1961). The seemingly unrealizable dimensions which Remak posited four decades ago in his description of potential avenues of comparatism are the dimensions which, collectively, AILC/ICLA has been elaborating in fact. This diversity sometimes is disconcerting or even intimidating for colleagues used to working in more restrictive environments, but it can also become exhilarating. AILC/ICLA provides a congenial home for comparatists with particular interests who can band together in working groups (e.g. to study the interrelation of literature and the other arts, to pursue South Asian literatures cross-culturally, to elaborate a theoretical understanding of literary learning with the aid of cognitive psychology, and so on). AILC/ICLA simultaneously provides a complex network which allows individuals to flow out of one approach or orientation into another. Respect for a multiplicity of CL activities creates a natural barrier against conformist norms, even when certain geocultural territories might for a time be in the grip of this or that prescriptive thinking. In this respect, we cannot underestimate AILC/ICLA's value to many colleagues as an instrument for gaining intellectual liberty under the sometimes adverse conditions in particular cultures.

www.byu.edu/~icla

The International Institute Charles Perrault, France (IICP)

Institut International Charles Perrault – France

Virginie Douglas

The Institute specializes in training, research and the organization of events in the field of children's literature and culture. It was founded in May 1994 by Paris-Nord University (Paris XIII), more particularly by Jean Perrot, Professor of Comparative Literature at this university and a specialist in children's books, and the town council of Eaubonne, which is situated a few kilometres north of Paris. Paris-Nord University has had considerable experience in the field of children's literature through training courses for librarians in particular, and the creation of the Institute corresponded to a further attempt at developing links between the educational system, professionals concerned with children's literature (from authors to publishers or librarians) and childhood culture in general, including multimedia materials or the cinema for instance. Indeed education in France is characterized by its rather theoretical stance while children's studies call for a more pragmatic viewpoint. Working at once with schools (experiments are carried out in classes in the Paris area), regional educational authorities and

university researchers has been a necessary step towards reconciling practical and theoretical attitudes to children's books. So one of the purposes of the Institute has been to bring down the barriers between the various approaches to the world of childhood studies and to facilitate contacts between the different fields and protagonists of children's literature and culture.

This is why, for instance, the Institute works in collaboration with the Departments of French, English, German, Education, Edition, Communications and Multimedia of Paris-Nord University. In particular, this cooperation has enabled the recent setting up of a website, which is a step towards reaching a larger number of people and making the Institute and children's literature in general better known. (A future step could be to introduce English texts on this site in order to open it to foreigners.) On the local level the Institute also carries out projects with the town of Eaubonne. One project in particular aims at widening children's access to literature by stressing the relationships between books and other media and by making the most of the dimension of play in reading. In the context of the renovation of a park in Eaubonne – Parc de la Chesnaie – the Institute suggests that, if sponsors can be found, part of the area could be devoted to the creation of a 'literary garden' focusing around famous characters of children's literature (like Alice) and providing multimedia access in connection with children's books or culture and with botany; the possibility of an open-air theatre is another idea. The problem remains to find some sponsors to support this project.

On the national level, the Institute seeks both to encourage creation and to develop the analysis of children's books. This twofold target can be seen in the literary awards called Prix Charles Perrault created by the IICP: every year the 'Prix Graphique' (Graphic Prize) rewards a graphic work (either illustrations or videos, films, etc.) on a given theme and three 'Prix Critiques' (Criticism Prizes) reward a book, a published article and an unpublished article about children's literature. Over the years, the Institute has worked with an ever greater network of either regular or occasional contributors, including authors, librarians, teachers, researchers or other professionals having an interest in children, a network which now reaches far beyond the Paris-Nord University research team involved in the launching of this organization in 1994. There are plans to develop cooperation with universities on the national level by establishing links between people likely to be interested in children's literature: the aim is to constitute a structure in which universities would take it in turn to organize events or invite authors. Besides, the Institute is working on a directory of researchers specialized in the field of children's literature in France. Through the pooling of resources and skills, the Institute wishes to decompartmentalize and therefore to de-ghettoize children's literature, as this literary category is still largely ignored or despised by French scholars and little is done in this field in universities: France lags behind other countries in this respect since, for instance, you cannot take a degree in children's literature and you can only study it as part of a few very specific subjects.

Another reason for founding such an association was to make up for the lack of international structures specializing in children's books and culture in France. There are organizations but most of them are mainly concerned with French children's literature and have little opening on to the international dimension of children's culture and studies. This international involvement is enhanced in several ways. The main aspect consists in the organization of international seminars, symposia or congresses at the Institute. The proceedings have been published and include *Visages et paysages du livre de jeunesse* (Faces and Landscapes in Children's Books: proceedings of the 1995 international congress), *Écritures féminines et littérature de jeunesse* (Women's Writing and Children's Literature: proceedings of the 1995 symposium), *Musiques du texte et de l'image* (Music in Texts and Illustrations: proceedings of the 1996 symposium), *Tricentenaire Charles Perrault* (Tricentennial of Charles Perrault: proceedings of the 1997 symposium), *Humour et identité culturelle* (Humour and Cultural Identity: proceedings of the 1996 symposium) and a bilingual book about *Tomi Ungerer, Prix Hans Christian*

Andersen / Tomi Ungerer's Toys and Tales. There have been other international meetings recently, for example a seminar about 'Children's Books and Visions of Childhood in Black Africa', another about the 'Contemporary Perspectives of the Children's Novel', and one will take place in March 2001 about 'Literary Appropriation in Fairy Tales'.

The accession of the Institute to membership of FILLM is yet another effort to reinforce its international dimension. Moreover the IICP would be glad to host an FILLM congress in the future. The Institute had previous experience of arranging a large venue when it organized in Eaubonne the 1998 Children's Literature Association conference on the theme 'Children's Literature and the Fine Arts'. A possible theme if a FILLM congress were to be held in France would be 'Water', which allows numerous approaches, from symbolism to ecology.

This international approach is also developed along other lines. The Institute is in touch with all the main international associations involved in children's literature, like the IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People). It takes part in a European research project on picture books, as the focus on illustrations enables the exchange of books between classes from different countries. International exchanges are also favoured through the invitation of foreign authors to stay at the Institute for periods of about 10 days, offering them the opportunity to meet French children as well as personalities from the book industry: in November 2000 for instance, in connection with the symposium about Africa, an author from Mali stayed in Eaubonne. Another aspect is the promotion of translation. Translations of children's books into French or from French into other languages are encouraged (e.g. by helping translators to find publishers) and studied in seminars. An interesting point is that a significant number of French authors have translated children's books into French. Moreover some of the seminars or training sessions are organized not only in French but also in English for foreign students wishing to widen their knowledge of French children's literature. A recent example was a seminar held in English in June 2000 on French illustrators of children's picture books.

I would say that the difficulties of the Institute spring from its strengths. The ambition and variety of its aims make it hard to find the necessary funds (in spite of subsidies from local or national authorities), but also the people or time to carry out at once the different missions it has set itself. It is sometimes difficult not to scatter energies when there is so much to do. One step towards the achievement of all these aims has been the recent development of the Institute's staff (now a president, a secretary-general, a secretary and two archivists), each person having a particular task to carry out. Efforts should also be made to increase attendance at the events organized and strengthen the continuity of the Institute with its members (there are 71 currently). The publication of a quarterly newsletter since March 1999 has partly been a solution to these problems.

www.univ-paris13.fr/perrault.htm

The International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSCl)

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Children's literature is increasingly recognized as a significant area and as a rich and growing field of academic study. It is of interest to literature and language scholars, teachers and