

Budapest (1992, on 'Literature as Resistance and Counter-Culture'), Reykjavík (1994, on 'Litteratur og kjønn i Norden'), Bonn (1996, on 'Opplysning i Norden'), 1998 (Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, on 'Nordisk litteratur og mentalitet'), and 2000 (Norwich, on 'Begynnelser og avslutninger i nordisk litteratur'). Normally held in August, these events are expected to be followed by the 24th Study Conference in Ålborg in 2002 and the 25th in Vienna in 2004. If some recent conference themes show a degree of specialization probably not envisaged by the founders of the conference, the health and stability of the IASS today are reflected by the sheer size of the discipline, the large numbers of participants at conferences, and, since the 1970s, the regular publication of substantial volumes of proceedings of each conference which ensure that the event plays a crucial role in the scholarly development of the subject.

The International Association of University Professors of English (IAUPE)

Ian J. Kirby

The International Association of University Professors of English (IAUPE) is at the time of writing in the middle of preparations for the celebration of its Jubilee. In 1948, the then editors of *English Studies* wrote to colleagues in British universities suggesting the institution of international conferences for professors of English. Two of these editors, Professors Zandvoort from Holland and Simonne d'Ardenne from Belgium, attended the 1949 annual meeting of British professors, where it was agreed that Professor C. L. Wrenn should organize a conference at Magdalen College, Oxford, in the summer of 1950. This was highly successful, and in 1951 IAUPE was formally constituted and affiliated to FILLM. A second conference was scheduled for 1953, to be held in Paris; and the Association quickly adopted a regular pattern of triennial meetings which has persisted until the present day, whereby they are held alternately in an English-speaking and a non-English-speaking country. In principle, they can be held anywhere in the world; in practice, they have so far been held in Europe and North America. Each succeeding venue is chosen by members present at the Business Meeting of a conference.

The 50th anniversary of the first conference in 2000 was followed in 2001 by a celebration, at Bamberg, of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Association. And this was done in some style. One of the keynote addresses was given by the distinguished author Nuruddin Farah, the other by Patrick Spottiswoode on the new Globe Theatre. In addition to our usual academic programme, which had papers on all aspects of English studies, there were special plenary sessions, one on the Rise of English in the world, the other on Global Aspects of English in the 21st century. A Jubilee volume, with refereed essays by members of the Association; was distributed at the conference, and on 15 August our last remaining founder member was honoured.

The Association currently publishes, 2 years in 3, a *Bulletin* whose principal aim is to disseminate information about the situation of English and English teaching around the world; it also contains one or two learned essays, and general information. We are, however, considering modifying this so that more emphasis is given to papers on any and all aspects of English studies, so that it will become more like a learned journal. We are of course well aware of the

difficulties inherent in launching such a publication at the present time; and a final decision on this will probably be taken at Bamberg.

Membership of IAUPE is open to university professors of English and other scholars of distinction. Up to the present time, the vast majority of members have been full professors of English at universities of international reputation, and the phrase 'other scholars of distinction' has been defined very narrowly. However, the tendency in many European universities not to promote to full chairs for financial reasons, and the opening of many new universities in the UK and elsewhere, has made it necessary for us to relax our requirements somewhat to ensure that younger scholars of real distinction can be elected to membership. This has already had the pleasing result that several such new members have been quickly promoted to full professor by their universities.

As can be seen, I have already moved into the area of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which I was invited to address; and with this in mind I should like to look at a few major problems of recent years. The first is the problem of an international association which is overwhelmingly composed of European and North American members, and which has so far held its meetings only in these areas. The problem is two-fold. In the first place, we have only a few members from the southern hemisphere, and these are principally in Australasia; in consequence, we are virtually limited to the months of July and August for our conferences, when our Australasian colleagues are half-way through their academic year. We did have an offer to host the conference in Australia some years ago; but it was at the time clear that the three-fold problem of distance, cost, and going from summer to the depths of winter would deter most of our members from attending.

The second problem is that of professors from soft-currency countries: and this falls into two parts – subscription payments, and attendance at conferences. We have recently solved the first by reducing or temporarily suspending dues; but the second is much more difficult. The UNESCO subventions we have received over the years have enabled us to ensure the presence at our conferences of five or six colleagues from such countries: and by establishing an IAUPE subsidy fund to which ordinary members contribute as part of their dues we expect to be able to invite eight or ten more. But this is only a small proportion of our total membership; we should like to be able to attract further external support.

The third problem is the proliferation of associations and of international conferences. In any year there are between six and eight conferences I should personally like to attend; for reasons of cost and of time, I must limit myself to two or three, and the choice comes down to priorities. In the last 25 years professors in many disciplines have been coming to know more and more about less and less: we have fewer and fewer professors of Medieval English, more and more who specialize in Anglo-Saxon, in Chaucer, in medieval theatre, and so on. Last summer I attended a meeting of the society for the study of *Lazarus's Brut*, one of my long-term interests, and had to miss out on the Chaucer centenary meeting. This is, I believe, a common experience among present-day scholars. What it means is that an Association such as IAUPE, which once had professors of English, or of English Language and Literature, now has professors of English Historical Linguistics, Gender Studies, Shakespeare, Eighteenth-Century Literature, and so on and so forth; and it is increasingly the case that professors in one area have relatively little to do with those in another. To maintain the appeal of our conferences, we shall need to be very responsive to the wishes of 21st-century colleagues. And we are in fact already doing so, for our Bamberg programme contains a much more substantial linguistics offering than in the past, with sections in creole languages and psycholinguistics, as well as in literary theory and textual criticism.

The fourth, and final, problem which I would like to address is that of conference venues. Up to now we have been able to hold our conferences at a university campus, for there has always been a member willing to take on the responsibility of organizing it – indeed, some-

times there have been two or three offers, and the triennial business meeting has had to vote. Obviously, this system has great advantages: the conference is planned by a professor who fully understands the interests and expectations of members, and it is as a rule much less expensive than one organized by a conference centre. However, just how much longer this happy situation will continue is difficult to predict, for fewer and fewer of us have the time and energy to devote to the organization of an international conference, which can easily take up all one's spare time for a year or more.

Since taking over the responsibilities of Secretary-General and Treasurer of IAUPE from the late and much missed John Lawlor, I have been able to make two changes to our practices which have proved very valuable. The first is the establishment of a system of payments by credit card, which has made it much easier to collect dues; the second is the computerizing of records and the production of a membership database. This cuts the secretarial work down very considerably, and has the further advantage of giving me information about members which is very useful for advance planning. All members are invited to name their principal fields of interest within English studies, and this makes it possible to ensure that the choice of sections at any conference will reflect majority interests. I can also supply to section chairmen lists of those members who are interested in their field, so that they can choose speakers partly at least from IAUPE members – though we have a certain number of guest speakers as well.

All in all, IAUPE is a thriving association, even though we shall have to keep a careful eye on developments, and modify our practices where it proves appropriate to do so.

www.unav.es/iaupe

The International Comparative Literature Association (AILC/ICLA)

Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée

Gerald Gillespie

Comparative literary studies gathered momentum throughout the 19th century in Europe and North America and began to thrive with the advent of Modernism. But the successful launch of an international collaborative organization specifically dedicated to comparative literary studies dates concretely from discussions held in the framework of the sixth congress of FILLM at Oxford in 1954. The daughter organization born there, the Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée/International Comparative Literature Association, is proud to figure today as the second largest affiliate of FILLM and to enjoy active relations with its parent. AILC/ICLA has in turn attracted close to three dozen national and regional associations of comparative literature (the discipline will henceforth be abbreviated CL) as collaborating organizations. Since the 1970s, our semi-annual *ICLA Bulletin* has regularly carried the names and contact data of such affiliated organizations and other vital news and information on CL internationally. It currently reaches some 5000 individual colleagues in about 70 countries as a membership benefit. AILC/ICLA's somewhat younger semi-annual journal *Literary*