

A black and white photograph of a room. In the center, a window with a dark frame is set into a dark wall. The window has two panes, and the word "ACLAN" is printed in large, bold, black capital letters across the lower pane. Below the window, a dark wooden chair with a curved back and a light-colored seat is positioned. The floor is made of light-colored wooden planks. To the left of the chair, a small, light-colored rectangular object lies on the floor. The overall lighting is dim, with the window providing the primary source of light.

ACLAN

A M E R I C A N
C O M P A R A T I V E L I T E R A T U R E A S S O C I A T I O N
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NATIONAL ACLA NEWS

The following are answers to our Spring, 1969 ACLAN query to Comparative Literature chairmen: "What is your definition of Comparative Literature?"

My definition of Comparative Literature has not really radically changed even since the completion of my own minor in what was then called "General Literature."

1. The basic notion associated with the term Comparative Literature is to me now as it was then, the study of movements, styles, genres, themes motifs, images, trope, etc., and authors, and works,, in the wider context of the general development of literature. The balance between this vertical, historical treatment and the horizontal, synchronic expansion across the national borders is one of the secrets of trade in this discipline, and the hardest thing to teach.

2. The above definition also determines the function of this field. We do not have to have a double major, but we must insist on one field (or more) of special competence and the ability to teach both in this field and also to teach special comparative courses devoted to such general topics as the ones listed under 1. (though here, again the students will probably concentrate on some more specific areas, be it movements, themes, genres, or what have you).

Z. Folejewski, Chairman
Comparative Literature
University of British Columbia

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Since "Comparative Literature," unlike "English," "German," "French," etc. does not limit itself as a term of reference to any one body of literary material which can be set apart from all others, and since total knowledge is beyond the reach of any undergraduate -- or graduate, or professional scholar -- it is clear that any major in Comparative Literature must be limited. The necessity for a good working knowledge of at least one foreign language for an undergraduate major can partly be accounted for outside the major, but perhaps not entirely, and may further limit what a student can accomplish in purely literary study. What, then, should or may an undergraduate major in Comparative Literature involve?

We at Occidental College (deriving largely from the Philo Buck-Wisconsin tradition) believe there should be five categories of study under the instructional aegis of the Comparative Literature department:

1. Introduction to Major Works of World Literature -- with emphasis on the Western tradition, but with room for literature of the orient and of the "emerging world." Perhaps a total of four courses.
2. A period (Romanticism, Baroque, Enlightenment, etc.); one or two courses. Perhaps one in the original language.
3. A genre (fiction, drama, lyric, or any workable subdivision); one or two courses.
4. Major figure -- concentration on the primary contributions of one or two literary figures. One possibility, where workable, is one course in the original language, one in translation, on the same figure.
5. Criticism -- preferably one course in major critical texts, one in recent and contemporary critical concerns. As an adjunct to criticism, some actual translation might well be required.

The above adds up to from ten to twelve courses, apart from the language requirement.

We cannot argue that this major gives every candidate an identical body of knowledge -- and this bothers some of our one-language oriented colleagues, who ask: "What is the discipline? What is the canon, the body of literature to be mastered?" We ask in turn: "How can you think of mastery of, for instance, English or German literature, since neither of them created its genres and no single period is the product of either nation, and since criticism, the basic definitional and analytical discipline, is multinational?"

The outlined Comparative Literature major produces a coherent sense of literary achievement and development, a basis for continued study, a background for teaching, and -- perhaps most important -- is a sound basis for the development of a high degree of literacy.

We recognize that the vast accumulation of literature and the many separate national traditions make many approaches possible. We propose this as one effective and satisfying definition of a major in Comparative Literature at the undergraduate level.

Kenneth Oliver and Basil Busacca
Professors
Comparative Literature and English
Occidental College

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The use of comparison and contrast between works of a single cultural and linguistic tradition with those of any other, for the purpose of more accurate observation, understanding, and evaluation of the character of these works.

H. M. Richmond
Professor of English
University of California, Berkeley

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Since we have been avoiding an exact "definition" of Comparative Literature at Rochester, let me rather describe our present activities. The separation established here between literary study and Languages + Linguistics has led to the formation of a department called Foreign + Comparative Literature. This department teaches everything offered in the college except English: Classics, French, German, Spanish, Russian, and oriental literatures. A department so constituted enjoys great liberty and flexibility in the creation of individual programs.

We have not succeeded in forming an undergraduate major in Comparative Literature and have abandoned the attempt. But at the graduate level we are fortunate in the many possibilities available to us. A Ph.D. may take one of three forms, all programs being adjusted to individual requirements and interests, so that no two persons need take the same degree:

1. Work along conventional lines in a national literature. At present this is confined to French and German.
2. Work mainly in a national literature but with some courses or seminars in a second literature. We call this combination, for example, Russian and Comparative Literature, the term in this usage meaning simply that a student has done graduate work in something other than his specialty. In practice, we expect that most of our degrees will be of this kind.
3. Finally, a student with the proper equipment may read for a degree in "Comparative Literature" as this term is now generally understood. If he can work in one ancient and two modern languages, his program may be directed away from concentration in a single literature, toward study of a period, a genre, or a movement. We have for example a candidate in medieval literature who has done graduate work in medieval Latin, Old French, and Middle High German. He has also had a seminar in Chaucer under the auspices of the Department of English.

The above is our response to the question, how would we define Comparative Literature. We would rather not define it, because if we knew exactly what it was that we were doing, we might be distracted from doing it freely.

Bernard N. Schilling, Chairman
Department of Foreign and
Comparative Literature
The University of Rochester

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R E G I O N A L N E W S

University of Illinois: Members of the Comparative Literature Program are pleased to welcome back to the Illinois campus Professor François Jost, Director of the Program. Professor Jost, who has been in the Center for Advanced Study for the past year, carried on his research in Europe. During May and June he delivered a series of lectures at the University of Innsbruck and the University of Fribourg. He also lectured at the Universities of Tübingen, Mainz and Bonn.

The Comparative Literature Program plans to establish a Graduate Year Abroad. While in Europe Professor Jost had the opportunity to consult with a number of institutions that have expressed willingness to serve as possible centers for the Year Abroad. Among those ready to undertake this program are the following:

the University of Bonn
the University of Mainz
the University of Tübingen
the University of Zürich
the University of Fribourg
the University of Innsbruck

We hope to provide further information regarding the Comparative Literature Program Graduate Year Abroad in the very near future.

Professor A. Owen Aldridge, a member of the Advisory Board of the American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies, attended the meeting of the Society in Chicago on September 5. During September 14-31 Professor Aldridge attended the Eleventh Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures at Islamabad, Pakistan, and delivered a paper entitled "The Influence of North American Revolutionary Propaganda in South America." During October 30-November 1 he took part in a symposium held by the Modern Greek Studies Association at Princeton University.

Professor Rocco Montano took part in a symposium on SYMBOLISM IN ART AND LITERATURE held at the University of Padova at Bressanone in Northern Italy from August 13-15. Professor Montano delivered a lecture on "Reality and Symbolism in Dante." Professor Montano has recently published the following:

"Influenza Crociana e Storicismo nella Critica Italiana";
in Filosofia: Anno XX, Fasc. II: Aprile, 1969.
pp. 223-244.

"Il Tasso e la Controriforma"; in Umanesimo, Vol. II,
Nos. 1-2; pp. 3-51.

"Is Socialism Still the Way Ahead?" in *ibid.* pp. 52-61.

"Pope Paul and Progressivism"; in *ibid.* pp. 98-105.

"Johnson and the Country"; in *ibid.* pp. 106-110.

"The Machinery that Failed"; in *ibid.* pp. 110-114.

"The Electoral College"; in *ibid.* pp. 115-116.

"On Criticism and History of Literature: Letter to René
Wellek"; in *ibid.* pp. 125-134.

"Una Pubblicazione Dell'Università Cattolica su Dante";
in *ibid.* pp. 139-143.

The members of the Comparative Literature Program are pleased to welcome to the Program Professor John Frey, who joined us this fall. He will teach one graduate seminar in Comparative Literature each semester.

We are also pleased to welcome Professor Vagn Steen from Denmark, who is presently Visiting Professor in German and Comparative Literature. Professor Steen is teaching Comparative Literature 461, a Seminar in Literary Forms. The topic is Modern Poetry.

Currently there are forty-five students enrolled in the Comparative Literature Program. Those who are now writing their dissertations are: Mrs. Agnes Brandabur, Mr. Arthur N. Flodstrom, Mr. Christopher Kertesz, Mrs. Barbara Bluege Lide, Mrs. Barbara Widenor Maggs, Mr. Noah Marcell, Mr. Bertel Pedersen, Mr. Samir Habib Rizk, Mrs. Helen Hikawyj Saciuk, Mrs. Kay Parnell Stoneking, and Mr. Graeme Douglas Tytler.

Six former students, who have already completed the doctorate in Comparative Literature are: Doctors Suzana Rigolet Cooper, Roger Barton Johnson, Siegfried Ernst Mews, Sondra Rosenberg, Anita Rosenblithe, and Barbara Martin Smalley.

Mrs. Patricia Pabisch is now secretary of the Comparative Literature Program, 401 Lincoln Hall. Her hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Barbara Martin Smalley

Stanford University: We are, as of September, 1969, empowered to offer the Ph.D. and, although we shall accept only a very limited number of students, we shall be able to offer all of them full financial aid for four years, partly in the form of straight fellowships and partly as teaching assistantships. We are requiring three foreign languages, in at least two of which students must be able to take graduate level courses. Everybody must have either French or German, and Latin is required for students specializing in everything but the last two centuries. I think that students should find us particularly strong in such areas as history and theory of criticism, methods of scholarship and the relation of literature to modern thought. Since Stanford happens to be strong in Chinese and Japanese, we are hoping to attract students who wish to include one of those languages in their program.

Our Committee consists of:

Marc Bertrand
Robert G. Cohn
Albert J. Guerard
David G. Halliburton
Herbert Lindenberger
Kurt Mueller-Vollmer
Lawrence V. Ryan

Since we are not listed in the current Stanford catalogue, we are sending a detailed information sheet on the program to prospective applicants.

Herbert Lindenberger, Chairman
Committee on Comparative Literature

I N T E R N A T I O N A L N E W S

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN BRITAIN: C.E.M. Joad used to preface an answer to an embarrassing question with the words: "It all depends what you mean by....." The question: "What about Comparative Literature Programs in Great Britain?" provokes a similar reaction in me.

There are, in fact, only two undergraduate Programmes in Great Britain, one at the University of East Anglia and the one at Hull College of Education (Institute of Education, University of Hull) which I established two years ago. At the University of Keele, a certain amount of comparative work is done during the Foundation Year common to all students. Sussex limits itself to some work done in a European context. And there is an optional paper in the Cambridge Tripos, which nobody ever takes. For the rest, there is a great deal of "students are encouraged to read widely in foreign literatures," but when the pass lists go up, the comparatist is nowhere.

The situation is not quite as bad as it seems to be. As Professor Anthony Thorlby noted (Times Literary Supplement, 26th July, 1968) recently, "Saintsbury, Grierson, Lewis, Nickerstath, Wilson Knight, Willey, Lucas Kermode and Davie are all men who have extended their scholarly knowledge and writing beyond what was strictly speaking their department." Yet this is not really good enough. If a man either does not know that he is a comparatist, or is ashamed to admit it, there is really little hope for the development of the discipline.

One reason why Comparative Literature is not developing as an attractive discipline is the notorious reluctance of the English to learn foreign languages. That sector of comparative literary studies which involves the comparison of national literatures requires a familiarity, at the spoken and written level, with the appropriate language vehicles. As a glance at UNESCO's Index of Translations will show, the British contribution to the translation effort is ridiculously small. Great Britain must be the only civilized country where foreigners, their speech and ways, are still a huge joke. If the situation along the East coast of England (where comparatists do exist and are not ashamed of it) is rather better, it is largely because the mass of the people at large are in daily commercial and social contact with Scandinavia and the Benelux countries.

Because the British are happily monoglot, most of the comparative work likely to be done in the future will be done as an interdisciplinary area. It will involve, as it does at Sussex, a comparison of institutions and a comparison of the literature associated with those institutions -- the literature of politics, the literature of history and so on. This sort of activity is obviously useful, where it is not just a contribution to the Two Cultures debate, and Professor Thorlby believes that "the most valuable implication contained in the concept of Comparative Literature may be that literature should be compared with something beyond itself."

Some work is done (especially at Hull) in "internal comparison" within a national literature. In the Hull Programme, a good deal of time is spent on the comparison of writing by and for children with writing by and for adults, a study proper to what is a sort of Faculty of Pedagogy containing the Programme. Some work is done, too, in the comparison of the vocabularies of adults at different educational backgrounds and of their tastes in literature and art forms with a large literary content (the film, "narrative" architecture and so on).

There remains the difficulty, in assessing the worth of all this activity, that the description of a man as a comparatist indicates a state of mind rather than a degree of academic achievement. Or maybe that is what we like to think in Great Britain, because our academic achievement as comparatists is very small. But, we do "show promise," notwithstanding Kingsley Amis' recent comment that we are a bunch of non-academics working in a non-discipline to a non-end.

Roy MacGregor-Hastie
University of Hull

A N N O U N C E M E N T S

ACLA Secretary Burton Pike (Queens College of the C.U.N.Y.) has communicated the following to us:

ACLS will be offering through the MLA six travel grants for persons reading papers or taking some other non-policy making role in the Congress at Bordeaux. Applications are to be made through the MLA; a description of the procedure for application will be in the January PMLA in the FMO section headed "ACLS Travel Grants." ACLA members are not to apply through the Association.

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I shamefacedly and regretfully announce that the article on Riccardo BACCHELLI in Volume I of my Encyclopedia of World Literature in the Twentieth Century (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1967) should show (p.87) the signature of DANTE DELLA TERZA in lieu of SERGIO PACIFICI's.

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In accordance with a recent policy decision by President Chandler Beall, to the effect that candidates for positions in Comparative Literature at American universities resident abroad and hence underprivileged in regard to employment channels could document ~~their~~ availability in the pages of ACLAN, I append the curriculum vitae of Dr. Vahé Oshagan, currently Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, who is available for placement in an American department or program of Comparative Literature in September of 1970:

Vahé Oshagan

Education and Degrees

1. St. George's School, Jerusalem - Palestine Matriculation Diploma.
2. Paris University, Faculte des Lettres - Licence ès Lettres, 1951.
3. Paris University, Faculte des Lettres - Docteur ès Lettres, 1957. Mention: Très Honorable.

Professional Experience

1. Collège Patriarcal, Beirut - teacher of French - 1952-1954.
2. Collège Makassod, Beirut - teacher of English and French Literature, of philosophy and psychology. 1954-1958.
3. International College, Beirut - teacher of English literature, of philosophy and psychology. 1958-
4. American University of Beirut - lecturer in French, 1961-1968
European Literature, 1967-1969
Cultural Studies (211, 212), 1968-

Extra-Curricular Activities within International College

1. Chairman of Philosophy Department
2. Member of Disciplinary Committee
3. Member of Curriculum and Examinations Committee
4. Member of International Baccalaureate Committee

Publications

1. Patouhan, book of poetry, Olympic Press, Beirut, 1956.
2. Psychology and Metaphysics, adapted for 7th year Secondary Classes, 287 pp., Beirut, 1961.
3. Logic and Ethics, adapted for 7th year Secondary Classes, 157 pp., Beirut, 1961.
4. Kaghak, book of poetry, Armenian Catholicossate Press, Antelias, 1963.
5. Le Roman Armenien Occidental de 1850 a 1930 et les Influences Etrangères: Doctoral thesis for Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, Paris University, 780 pp. mimeograph, Beirut, 1967.
6. Regular contributions, during the past 25 years, to around 20 different dailies, weeklies, monthlies, and periodicals of poems, short stories, critical essays, literary studies and plays. From 1962 to 1967 was on the Editorial Staff of Pakino, monthly journal of literature and the Arts.

W. B. Fleischmann, Editor