

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN CANADA

A BRIEF OPENING

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CRCL/RCLC had its first issue in 1974, and forty years later we are still a pluralistic journal studying Comparative Literature in its tradition and innovation. Instead of seeking a report as a collection of long articles on the state of Comparative Literature by senior scholars in the field, I thought it best to go to graduate students and scholars before or without tenure to see what is happening now and what their thoughts and aspirations might be concerning the field generally and in Canada. I asked them to keep their contributions brief and to discuss the field or to show Comparative Literature in action. The authors are Canadians or those working in Canada who have much to say about Comparative Literature. These contributors are concerned with Comparative Literature and work in many regions of the country in large and small institutions, in French and English, and one contributor is writing from Australia.

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Lindsay Parker, in “You *and* Me: Relational Ontologies in Canadian Comparative Literature,” writes about critical and collaborative labour in the field of Comparative Literature and the importance of decolonization and indigenization. In “La littérature comparée et son extension prochaine,” Tristan Bera discusses knowledge, ideas, values and media in relation to the future of Comparative Literature. Alexandre Desbiens-Brassard’s “The Road Less Travelled: A Student’s Perspective on Exploring Uncharted Literary Territory Terrain in Graduate Research Projects” asks about what one should compare and suggests, from the experience of his own research, that it is best is to choose difficult comparisons and not take the easy road. Jacqueline Sloan Morgan, in “Meeting Ground: Considering the Place, Value and Choice of Comparative Literature,” sees Comparative Literature as a meeting place that allows for critical approaches, such as in her own work on women’s settlement literature in Australia and Canada. In “Critical Regionalism and the Goals of Comparative Literature,” Pushpa Acharya points out some of the limitations of World Literature in

North America through its reliance on English translations and suggests how critical regionalism can supplement and create alternatives, as in the case of the periphery in South Asia to balance India. Juan Carlos Rodriguez's "The Nuances of Comparing or Justifying Comparative Literature Programs" explores the perils, challenges and strengths of the field in the face of budget cuts and Cultural Studies and suggests that humanism in Comparative Literature helps to avoid dogmas. In "The Comparative Impetus: Thoughts on the Changing Landscape of Comparative Literature," Christian Ylagan calls attention to globalization, internationalization and multiculturalism and the way Comparative Literature in Canada and North America could transform itself to take into consideration the diversity of its student body, which is increasingly international and interested in "peripheries." Andrea C. Valente, in "Comparative Canadian Literature," presents an autobiographical narrative that is heuristic and open to the possibilities of the field in Canada, including its relation to media, and does so mainly in terms of translation, invisibility and canon. For Avishek Ray, in

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These graduate students and scholars early in their career help to provide, with their brief and readable articles, as much as a manifesto and illustration of Comparative Literature as a kind of report on the ground, giving us, to use Harry Levin's phrase, new "grounds of comparison." *CRCL/RCLC* is forty, experienced, but a young forty, so it is continuously looking for innovation and ways forward. Thank you once more to these contributors and to our readers.