

# Encompass

Alumni newsletter of the Comparative Literature Program

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Winter 1985

## Comparative Literature looks back

1985 marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Comparative Literature Program at Indiana University. In this anniversary year the Program saw the chairmanship change for only the second time in its history. Breon Mitchell, who served as chair for the last eight years, stepped down to return to full-time teaching and writing. Ulrich Weisstein has stepped in to take his place.

At a reception held for Breon on September 27 in the Indiana Memorial Union, faculty and students gathered to honor our outgoing chairman for his skillful leadership. Students recalled his excellent advising and judicious diplomacy; Henry Remak reminded the assembly that although an outgoing chairman, Breon was still a "youngster"; and Ulrich Weisstein presented Breon with a gift from the faculty, a volume devoted to the work of Henri Matisse.

Also present at the reception were Horst and Evelyn Frenz, who continue to live in Bloomington and are often seen at Comparative Literature functions. Mrs. Frenz

praised Breon for his success as chairman and reflected briefly on her own and Mr. Frenz's experiences in Bloomington since the Program was founded. Comparative Literature is certainly one of the few programs or departments at Indiana which can boast of having had only three chairmen in 35 years.

In the past eight years, Comparative Literature at IU has seen a number of changes. While the structure of the undergraduate program has remained much the same, improvements were made in the honors program to clarify requirements and options. On the graduate level, students now can choose among three ways to complete their master's projects: by submitting a suitable term or seminar paper; by writing an original essay; or by writing a formal thesis. To recognize the best essay written by a graduate student in a Comparative Literature course, a Memorial Essay Prize in honor of the late Newton P. Stallknecht was established in 1981 by his friends and colleagues. Four such prizes have been distributed.

The PhD program has seen a number of changes as well. These include the addition of a PhD minor in literary theory, jointly administered by Comparative Literature and the Department of English. In addition, PhD students may now fulfill their minor requirements by concentrating on one intensive minor, or by taking two minors in the traditional fashion. In effecting these changes, the faculty has attempted to make the choices available to graduate students both clear and flexible.

Since 1977, several new members were added to the faculty. Claudia Gorbman, who had come to Indiana as a lecturer in Film Studies, joined the faculty in 1978. That same year, Oscar Kenshur arrived to teach philosophy and literature, and in 1979 Sumie Jones was hired to teach in the area of Japanese-Western literary relations. In the last eight years Indiana has also welcomed J. Michael Holquist, who came to us from the University of Texas at Austin, and Marvin Carlson, who was formerly at Cornell. Both men have taught for Comparative Literature, although neither has his primary appointment in the Program. Up to the present academic year, Michael Holquist has chaired the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. Marvin Carlson is currently director of graduate studies in the Department of Theatre and Drama.

More recently, Comparative Literature has hired two additional faculty members. Herbert Marks is teaching Biblical literature and literary theory, while Barbara Klinger has joined the faculty in the areas of popular culture, film theory, and American cinema.

In these times of financial difficulty for departments in the humanities, the Comparative Literature Program has managed to maintain its reputation for excellence and continues to expand into new areas of research. As the following pages demonstrate, alumni, faculty, and students alike are engaged in a wide variety of academic activities, providing evidence that individuals, as well as departments, in the humanities can flourish in difficult times.



(Left to right): Breon Mitchell, Horst Frenz, and Ulrich Weisstein

## From the chairman

Having served as chair of our Program for eight years, Professor Breon Mitchell is now returning to full-time teaching. As his colleague and successor, I wish to thank him for having been such a skillful helmsman, steering the ship through waters both rough and smooth.

Our faculty remains active on campus, throughout the United States, and abroad by attending professional meetings, delivering lectures, serving as scholars in residence or visiting professors, and publishing books and articles on a bewildering variety of subjects. This past summer, many of us participated in the Paris Congress of the ICLA, an occasion which, once again, demonstrated the worldwide strength of our Program. Our student body continues to be sound and representative both geographically and in the broad spectrum of our offerings in various subdisciplines. And the *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, now in its thirty-third year of publication, remains an important link to the scholarly world.

It is too early for me to describe at length the goals I have set for myself as chairman. However, I should like to identify three facets of the Program I hope to emphasize. Firstly, I would like to strengthen its international component by establishing or reaffirming ties with other Programs, initiating exchanges of various kinds and on various levels, and recruiting students

from countries or zones that are currently underrepresented.

My second concern is the undergraduate program which, though thriving in enrollment, is perhaps not quite as visible as it ought to be. We must make a special effort to identify prospective majors on the freshman and sophomore levels. I think we are in an excellent position to attract good minds since the undergraduate program has served repeatedly as a model imitated by colleges throughout the nation. My third objective, in keeping with this letter, is the strengthening of ties with our alumni, a vital endeavor since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the success of former students within and outside of academe is a measure of our success.

Part of our effort to reach this last objective has been the revival of this alumni newsletter. Now titled "Encompass," it will be published on a regular basis twice a year. We urge you to send news of general interest, including your current positions, activities, and publications, to the editor. (See page 3.) Offprints are most welcome. We also urge you to revisit your alma mater. The Comparative Literature office is still located in Ballantine Hall 402.

I hope to hear from you or to see you during one of the upcoming conventions and professional meetings.

Ulrich Weisstein

## IU faculty and (former) students meet in Paris

Six alumni and six members of the Comparative Literature faculty attended the eleventh triennial congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, held at the Sorbonne in Paris August 20-24. *Amiya Dev* (PhD'67) spoke on comparative Indian literature, while *Andreas Poulakidas* (PhD'67) participated in a panel on acculturation. *John Boening* (PhD'71), who edits the ICLA Bulletin, gave a paper on Rilke's reception in America. Two alumni who received their PhD's in 1975 also attended: *William Slaymaker* took part in a symposium on the "Diaspora Protestante," while *Nancy Watanabe* took Mallarmé as the subject for her paper. *Krin Gabbard* (PhD'79) spoke on "ring composition" in oral and written texts.

Turning to IU faculty, *Matei Calinescu* was co-organizer of a major symposium

on postmodernism and gave the opening statement. Among the participants in this symposium were *Ingeborg Hoesterey* (Department of Germanic Studies) and *Breon Mitchell*. Also attending were *Eugene Eoyang*, who addressed the translation section, and *Henry Remak*, honorary president of the coordinating committee and the only American on the nine-member Committee of Honor. *Ulrich Weisstein* was elected to a three-year term as American secretary of the association. He has been a member of the association's executive committee since 1979.

Many of you will remember *Joseph Ricapito*, a former Comparative Literature faculty member now at Louisiana State University. He spoke on Cervantes and the Italian *novellistica*.

## Prizes awarded

The Comparative Literature Program now makes several annual awards at the spring picnic. The Gilbert V. Tutungi Award, created in 1969, was given this year to two students in recognition of their excellent theses. Cynthia Erb wrote on "*Technique et Idéologie Reconsidered: Implications of Comolli's Historiographical Theory for Histories of Color Film Processes*," while Susan Robel's thesis was entitled "Sensationalism, Cinematic Realism and Dashiell Hammett." The Newton P. Stallknecht Memorial Essay Prize, established in Professor Stallknecht's memory in 1981, is awarded for the best essay written by a graduate student in a Comparative Literature course. The 1985 prize has been given to Takashi Wakui and Charles Brichford.

The third prize, the Undergraduate Award for the graduating senior(s) outstanding in academic achievement, potential, and service to the Program, went this year to Bruce Hattendorf and Deanna Shoss. All of these awards carry a small honorarium, which is supplied by contributions to the Development Fund.

An additional award has been proposed in order to provide a graduate student of high caliber with a full fellowship for one year. This annual fellowship is to be named in honor of Horst Frenz, the founding chairman, and to be underwritten by contributions from alumni, faculty, and friends.

## A few words from the editor

After an absence of five years, the Comparative Literature Alumni Newsletter has re-emerged, phoenix-like, from the ashes of its illustrious predecessors. Those of you who read the last issue, edited in 1980 by Professor Henry Remak, will realize that we have adopted a new name and a new format, the latter with the assistance of the Indiana University Alumni Association. We hope to publish a second issue in the coming spring with funds provided solely by the Comparative Literature Program.

We welcome your comments and suggestions on "Encompass." I would like to second Professor Weisstein in his request for news about your current activities. Please use the form provided or write directly to him, or to me, in the Comparative Literature Office, Ballantine Hall 402, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

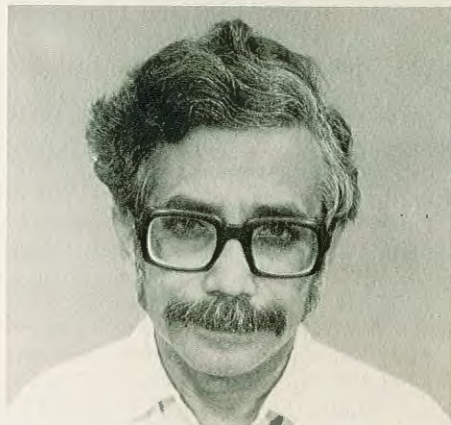
Iris Smith  
Editor

# Focus on: Amiya Dev

(In each issue we will run a feature article on an alumna or alumnus. These columns will be titled "Focus On.")

One of the leading Indian comparatists, Amiya Dev, returned to Indiana University for a lecture on September 5, 1985. His topic was "From Comparative Literature to Comparative Indian Literature: An Application or an Extension?" Professor Dev received his PhD from the Comparative Literature Program in 1967 and currently serves as chairman of the Department of Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University in Calcutta. He also edits the *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature*.

Noting that Indian literatures require a comparative focus, Professor Dev pointed out that relations among the various literatures of India — such as Tamil, Bengali, Hindi, and English — are characterized as multilingual, rather than polylingual. Unlike the polylingual relations of Western European literatures, which have emerged from distinct historical traditions and pose problems of periodization for the comparatist, Indian literatures are multilingual. That is to say, they exist within one large political entity and a common Indian tradition the periods of which are well-defined. In this respect, India resembles a country such as Belgium, where a bilingual tradition flourishes. Indian comparatism, Professor Dev claims, should devote itself to studies of this multilingualism and to reception. For that reason, he now believes it is imperative to examine Indian literature written in English — a field once thought to be of little interest to Indian comparatists — and to look at the interrelations of literature and folklore, an area which has received little attention.



Professor Dev's latest publications include *The Idea of Comparative Literature in India* (1984), *Sudhindranath Datta* (1982), and "Modern Bengali Poetry: Tagore and After," which appeared in Volume I of *Comparative Indian Literature* (1984). He has also published in *The Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* and numerous English-language and Bengali journals. He has translated Peter Weiss, Kafka, and Mordecai Richler, among others, into Bengali.

Besides his interests in myth and popular fiction, Professor Dev encourages the study of comparative literature as the most effective methodology to apply to Third World literature. "The West has a heavy burden of theorizing," he said in answer to questions after his lecture. India receives Western literary theory perhaps ten years after its appearance, but challenges this influence with its own theoretical traditions. He suggested that the traditional comparative approaches, while being a product of Western thinking, will largely belong to the Third World.

# In the news

## Alumni

*Tijani El-Miskin* (PhD'84): "I have been doing well here teaching in the University of Maiduguri, situated in the capital of Borno, one of Nigeria's nineteen states . . . Please extend my best wishes to members of our great department, students and professors alike."

*Gregg Richardson* (MA'82), whose translation of Kurt Wais's "Symbiose der Künste" appeared in the *YCGL* of 1983 and who has made his home in San Francisco during the past several years, is currently staying in Seoul, Korea. In a postcard written in September 1985, he told of a production of *La Bohème* he enjoyed: "Italian company. All the Parisians were Korean, singing Italian, dressed 19th. [century] French."

*Jim Hermsen* (BA'77), who lives in Indianapolis, is spending much of his free time working for the German Heritage Foundation of Indiana. He edits the foundation's newsletter and helps arrange exchange visits between representatives of German and Indiana towns.

*David Hertz* (MA'79) writes from New York University, where he has had a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship and now is visiting assistant professor: "Currently, I am preparing my first book for publication . . . *The Tuning of the Word: The Musico-Literary Poetics of Symbolism* [with Southern Illinois University Press] . . . New scholarly projects are also in the works. As for my musical endeavors, I have recently been rehearsing parts of my adaptation of *Lysistrata*. I have made it into a sort of operetta, with new lyrics and an original piano/vocal score."

*David Homel* (BA'74) is currently serving as president of the Canadian Literary Translators Association. He chaired a panel on translating Quebec literature at the ALTA meeting held October 5-6 at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville.

## Faculty

*Yoshio Iwamoto* gave a paper entitled "Polar Views on Life: Mishima's Aestheticism versus Ōe's Existentialism" at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, Miami University (Oxford), October 11-13.

*James W. Halporn*, who is currently chairing Classical Studies, was elected a member of the Committee on Publications by the American Philological Association. In addition, the Board of Directors of the association appointed him chairman of the Committee on Archives.

In 1985 *Mary Ellen Solt* saw the publication of her book, *Dear Ez: Letters from William Carlos Williams to Ezra Pound*. The book was published by the private press of Frederick Brewer for the Lilly Library.

## Tell us about yourself . . .

Pass along the latest about yourself to *Encompass*, Indiana University Alumni Association, IMU M-17, Bloomington, IN 47405. Please use this form for address correction.

Your news \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

IU degree(s) and date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

# In the news

Breon Mitchell began a two-year term as president of the American Literary Translators Association at its annual meeting, held October 5-6 at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. Breon recently translated three stories by Martin Grzimek which appeared as *Heartstop. Three Stories* (1984). He also contributed an introduction to *Fancy Goods. Open All Night* (1984), two stories by Paul Morand which were translated by Ezra Pound. The manuscripts of these translations were part of the purchase made by the Lilly Library of the recently discovered Pound material.

A session of the ALTA meeting on translating from Chinese was chaired by Eugene Eoyang, who served as chairman of East Asian Languages and Cultures at IU during the 1984-1985 academic year.

Willis Barnstone, who also participated in the ALTA meeting, spent the 1984-1985 academic year in the People's Republic of China where he taught at Beijing Foreign Studies University. *The Alphabet of Night*, a book of his poems, was among his publications in 1984. He also translated interviews and poetry for *Twenty-four Conversations with Borges*.

Irving Lo took part in a semester-long program at Marietta College (Ohio) on "China and the West" by giving a lecture on October 17 entitled "Dead Deer in My Heart: Tradition and Continuity in Modern Chinese Poetry."

Currently on sabbatical, Peter Boerner participated in a symposium sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft on the topic "Rom — Paris — London. Erfahrung und Selbsterfahrung deutscher Schriftsteller und Künstler in den fremden Metropolen." At the Seventh Congress of the International Association of Scholars

of Germanic Languages and Literatures (IVG), held at Göttingen August 25-31, he read a paper on Goethe's image of his compatriots from a comparative perspective.

Ulrich Weisstein, who also attended the congress of the IVG, spoke on Brecht's epic opera seen in the context of the European avant-garde.

During the summer Luis Beltrán presented a series of lectures on Spanish poetry of the Renaissance at the Colegio "Jaime del Amo," Universidad Complutense, Madrid.

Sumie Jones participated in the annual meeting of the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, held October 11-13 in Oxford, Ohio. She spoke on "The Status of Language and Literature during the Mid-Tokugawa Period."

Henry Remak gave a keynote address on "Between Scylla and Charybdis: Quality Judgment in Comparative Literature" at an international colloquium on literature and values, held at the University of Sussex in Brighton, England, August 26-29.

In 1984 Marvin Carlson saw the publication of his book *Theories of the Theatre*. Recently he directed a production of *Marat/Sade* at IU's University Theatre and will collaborate in the spring semester with Clifford Flanigan on a graduate course, out of which they plan to stage four plays

about St. Nicholas. Cliff was closely involved with the fall 1985 production of a Bach *Gottesdienst*. He is working as well on a fourteenth-century candlemass, to be presented publicly on February 2.

## Students

Passing by train through Salt Lake City in August, Claus and Maria Clüver had a short visit with *Robert and Betsy* (Ross) Fetzer and their three children. Robert is working for the family firm (third generation) that makes "Stilmöbel." Betsy has just begun law studies.

Jean Kane has completed her undergraduate honors work with an excellent thesis on "Mythic Time and Space in Joyce's 'Penelope' and Picasso's *Reclining Nude*." She has begun an MFA in Creative Writing at Stanford University this fall.

Barry Rosen (MA'83) recently published an article in *Folklore Forum* titled "Metamärchen: Reevaluating and Defining the Romantic Kunstmärchen."

Nick Strout (BA'80) has just spent a year in Hamburg on a DAAD fellowship. Nick is finishing his master's thesis on "Literary Criteria in Contemporary Jazz Improvisation."

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