

ICLA Arabic Comparative Literature Standing Research Committee

Chairs:

Fatiha Taib (Professor of Arabic and comparative Literature,
Mohamed V University, Morocco)

Lobna Ismail (Associate professor of English and comparative literature,
Cairo University, Egypt)

First Annual Activity Report 2024-2025

❖ Members and Scope

In addition to the two presidents from Cairo University in Egypt and Mohammed V University in Morocco, the committee includes two honorary members from these universities, as well as twenty-one advisory members from various Arab and international universities. After its accreditation in the Seoul elections, the committee will open its membership to renowned researchers, early-career academics, and postgraduate comparative literature students worldwide.

(<https://www.aile-icla.org/research-committee-on-arabic-comparative-literature>)

The committee addresses the following objectives:

1. Facilitation of dialogue between Arab and international researchers in the field of comparative literature via:
 - a. The identification and introduction of Arabic contribution and achievement in the field of comparative literature in a

collective critical work with both Arab and international contributors.

b. Bolstering relations between comparative literature departments at universities in the Arab world and other universities and academic institutions worldwide where researchers are involved in studies related to modern and classic Arabic culture.

2. Promoting emerging critical approaches and methods in comparative literary studies that characterize the Arabic cultural scene, namely, transculturality : the dialogue of literatures across national borders (and within the same culture) and the literatures of moving identities (literature of migration and exile), the transregional and transhistorical flow/travel of ideas, concepts, theories, movements across languages and media, domestication and foreignization in Literary Translation Studies, and other cultivated, developing or emerging research interests generated by recent interaction with international updates in the critical and literary field like those related to cultural production/industry, mediality (the tourist imaginary, animation and comics, etc), discursivity, digital humanities.

❖ Activities

A. Future Collaboration with Brill Publishing

In December 2024, after a series of email communications, Masja Horn, Senior Acquisitions editor at De Gruyter Brill's Cultural Studies, expressed to Professor Taib the readiness of Brill's Literature and Cultural Studies Program and Brill | Sense to collaborate on a themed volume or a special issue from the committee's work.

https://www.degruyterbrill.com/publishing/subjects/cultural-studies?lang=en&srsltid=AfmBOoq_Y71gN9HLF5gZvlcfjImQkPPivWM07PsN7mWthaUUgm7GHf8Q

B. Arab Group Session, Seoul 2025

The committee began its scientific activities by organizing a bilingual English-French panel on the topic of "Korean Culture and the Arab World: From the Middle Ages to the Internet Age" at the upcoming ICLA congress in Seoul.

The topic of the panel falls under the committee's second objective mentioned above: « promoting emerging critical approaches and methods in comparative literary studies that characterize the Arabic cultural scene ».

Ten participants will contribute to the panel : the two chairs & two honorary members of the committee, one advisory member, and seven experienced and early-career comparative literature researchers from Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates.

C. ICLA Biannual Lecture Series

Six members of the committee, from both Arab and international universities, have proposed the following six topics to contribute to/be presented in the ICLA Biannual Series.

- **Nouri Gana:** "Melancholy of the Oppressed: Kanafani *avec* Fanon"
- **Osama Madani:** "Sea in the Desert, Desert in the Sea: An Inflected Spatial Image East and West"
- **Gonzalo Fernandez Parrilla:** "Traveling through books. A "Booktrip" to Moroccan Literatures".
- **Fatiha Taib:** "'The Third World' as a Translational Phenomenon: A Future Perspective"
- **Mohamed Eid:** "The Lost Nahadawi: Rediscovering Taha Hussein's Reformist Vision through Topic Modeling"
- **Abderrahman Beggar:** "The Figure of the Deported Arab in New Caledonia. Jail and Identity Construction."

The topic of Professor **Nuri Gana** was chosen by the committee chairs to represent the committee.

6. Scientific Activities and Publications

6.1 Scientific activities

In addition to participating in international conferences, the members of the Arabic Comparative Literature Standing Research Committee actively deliver inaugural lectures and organize international conferences and panels on comparative and world literature :

•Participations (Examples) :

- XVII Biennial International Conference, University of Delhi (10-12th September, 2024)

Lobna Ismail (English):

«The Impertinence of Pain: When Calvino's Fantastic Turns Marginality into Lines of Flight in Post-Invasion Iraqi Narratives».

- The 15th EURAMAL Conference, Charles University, Prague (27-31 May, 2024), « Ecocritical Approaches and Environmental Issues in Modern Arabic Literature »

➤ **Monica Rocco** (English):

« We are vain beings, and only the humility will save us: Muhammad al-Makhzanji's Project for an Environmental Literature » .

➤ **Fatiha Taib** (Arabic):

« Kafkaism in Moroccan Fiction: The Symbolism of Turning into a Monkey in "Kafka in Tangier" » .

• Inaugural Lectures (Examples) :

○ **Mahmoud Abdelghaffar** (Arabic) :

- « Korean Arabic Literature: Between Naguib Mahfouz and Han Kang » (Center for Arabic Language and Culture, Cairo University, 2024)

- **Baian Rayhanova** (English):

- «Female Images in Modern Arabic Fiction »(University of Warsaw, Poland, 2024).

- **Boutheina Khaldi** (English):

- « The Woman that is Worth Ten Men: Nabawiyya Musa's Reformist Project in the Early Twentieth Century » (University of NYU Abu Dhabi, 2024).

- **Marie Therese Abdelmessih** (Arabic):

- «The Presence of Arabo Islamic Culture in Selections from British and French Romantic Literature» (Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco, 2025).

- **Organizing conferences.** Here are some examples.

- **František Ondráš & Baian Rayhanova** :

- The 15th EURAMAL conference (27-31 May 2024, Charles University , Prague) « Ecocritical Approaches and Environmental Issues in Modern Arabic Literature» .

- **Mohamed –Salah Omri & Tristan Leperlier** :

- The international panel «Maghreb Literature as World Literature» (Oxford, 11-12 September 2025).

- This panel is the first step toward a volume in Bloomsbury's "Literature as World Literature" series, edited by Tristan Leperlier (CNRS) and Mohamed-Salah Omri .

- Arturo Monaco & Mariangela Masullo** :

- The upcoming International Workshop: «Greek Myths in Arabic Literature: Reception, Translation, Circulation, and Re-Creation» (Rome, November 6-8, 2025). (It was announced in the March 2025 ICLA newsletter).

6.2 Publications :

Members of the ICLA Arabic Committee also contribute to the publication of peer-reviewed journal articles, translations, and books in multiple languages, including Arabic, French, English, Spanish, and Italian.

•Articles (Examples)

- **Mohamed Eid**, «The Potential and Limits of Arabic Digital Humanities» (English, 2024)
- **Lobna Ismail**, «The Pangs of Genius: Alexander Pushkin, Inspiration That Never Fades» (Arabic, 2025).

• Translations & Books (Examples)

- Wang YOUYONG**: *Selections from Confucius' Book of Dialogue* (Translation from Chinese into Arabic, 2024).
- Monica Ruocco & Francesca Maria Corrao**: *Arabic literature: from pre-Islamic to postclassical times* (Italian, 1th V 2024).
- Said Allouch**: *Preprint literature* (Arabic 2024) .
- **Fatiha Taib** : *Comparative Literature in Arab Universities Today* (Arabic. Announced in the June 2024 ICLA newsletter).
- **Gonzalo Fernández Parrilla** : *South of Tangier. A journey into the cultures of Morocco* (Spanish, 6th edition , 2025) .

7. Upcoming First Newsletter :

We are finalizing the committee's first newsletter. Here are its contents:

- Editorial
- Notes on the Presentation of the ICLA Arabic Comparative Literature Standing Research Committee

- Members' Biographies
- Members' Scientific Activities
- Arab Group Session at ICLA Seoul Congress, 2025
- Projects :
 1. Comparative Research Projects in Arab Universities
 2. Reference work in English on the Arab contribution in Arabic to comparative literature
- Latest Comparative Literature Publications

8. Upcoming Online Workshop:

Topic: Comparative Projects in Arab Universities

Epistemological Questions and Methods

The call for papers will be released at the end of September 2025.

9- First project:

Translate reference books representing the Arab contribution to comparative literature from Arabic and French into English.

Fatiha Taib & Lobna Ismail

June 30th, 2025.