On a Sunday last September, I went to Seattle's Bumbershoot Festival to listen to Ashok Mathur and Ngugi wa Thiong'o read from their recent work. After the reading, Ngugi suggested that he and I have a chat over lunch, so we sat in a tent enjoying a spicy meal, reflecting on where various circumstances in our lives had taken us, and discussing the plans in progress for the ACLALS 2007 conference in Vancouver. Both Ashok and Ngugi had contextualized their readings by speaking personally and passionately about the issues and concerns that fuel postcolonial literatures, and I returned home that day with a renewed sense of ACLALS' significant role in society.

Needless to say I was deeply distressed when I read (at http://www.africaresource.com/content/view/180/202/) that Ngugi had been humiliated in a San Francisco hotel merely for sitting in their lounge. In a statement to Priority Africa Network (PAN), he wrote: “It was indeed ironic that I should suffer injury when I was on a tour to promote Wizard of the Crow, a novel that talks about the dignity of the human person irrespective of their outward appearances.” Ngugi's experience shows that although our world has been 'globalized', it has not become a global village in the desired sense of this concept. Obviously there is much still to be done by us all.

In November 2006, Geoffrey Davis, Chair of the European Branch, represented ACLALS at the Commonwealth Foundation meeting in London, and conveyed our interest in participating at CHOGM in November 2007. Since then, the Foundation has confirmed that the Commonwealth People's Forum during these meetings will be at the Africana Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, 19-22 November, 2007, on the theme “Realising People's Potential.” In his letter to the member associations, Mark Collins, Director of the Foundation, writes: “The 2007 Commonwealth People's Forum in Kampala will demonstrate to governments a real depth of knowledge and show that it truly brings the voices of excluded and marginalized people to the fore.” Geoffrey and I have discussed that it would be desirable for ACLALS to participate in such an event, as writers and researchers have much to offer to the dialogue that shapes ideas, policies and practices of NGOs, governments, and associations.

I hope we continue to collaborate in various ways with the global community, even as ACLALS maintains its literary mandate. For instance, ACLALS attended the 16th Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers in Cape Town in December 2006 through the kind courtesy of Peter Williams, Hon. Secretary Treasurer of the Commonwealth Consortium for Education (CCFE), who invited us to join their delegation. As I could not attend, Harry Garuba of the University of Cape Town, a member of our South Africa Branch as well as an editor of Postcolonial Text, went in my stead.

Meanwhile, in consultation with several Association members including Shirley Chew at Leeds who found a legal counsel and Alastair Niven who agreed to be our UK representative, ACLALS was registered as a non-profit organization in November 2006. We now have a Tax Reference number which formalizes our accreditation to The Commonwealth, giving assurance of eligibility for continued funding from the Commonwealth Foundation and, we hope, other sources. You will find ACLALS updated in the current edition of Encyclopedia of Associations: International Organizations (IO), a directory of over 27,000 international non-profit membership organizations, as well as in The Yearbook of International Organizations.

I'm pleased to share with you that at a teleconference of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize Advisory Board (which I attended in the early hours of August 31, 2006), Andrew Firmin of the Commonwealth Foundation spoke of his wish to bring to our conference several of the 2007 Commonwealth Writers' Prize winners. He has been keen on ACLALS becoming more involved in the CWP and, particularly, to provide an educational benefit to the wider community through the proposed CWP visit. I am hoping that we can form a province-wide committee to plan a program in this regard.

Meanwhile, the preparations for our conference in Vancouver are coming along well - funding negotiations for keynote speakers are in progress (several already confirmed), and we have accepted nearly 400 paper proposals, promising a full and vibrant program.

See you in August - the welcome mat will be out!

Ranjini Mendis, Chair
Looking Ahead to the 2007 Conference

The preparations for the 14th ACLALS conference are proceeding apace. As the days and months flit by, the activities in the kitchen, so to speak, have accelerated. From basic tasks like arranging accommodations to applying for grants and encouraging participation from various parts of the world, many committees are busily working away under the able leadership of Ranjini Mendis.

One of the most challenging tasks was, of course, the choice of the theme for the 14th triennial. The very process of coming up with creative ideas and finally settling on “Literature for Our Times” was highly stimulating. I do think that we chose wisely. The theme reflects an almost universal sense around the world today that we live at a turning point in the planet’s history, and old certitudes are no longer able to help us navigate through the new challenges thrown up for humanity. As the planet is threatened with environmental meltdown, as wars of aggression using weapons of mass destruction kill large numbers of innocent human beings and leave countless numbers of living dead in their wake, as marginalized people like Dalits in India and the Aboriginal peoples in the Americas resist their centuries-old oppression and demand a place in the sun, we, the inhabitants of this planet, are looking for answers that literature might, or might not, provide. Also, we perhaps need to forge new tools to read it in terms of perspectives forced upon us by demands of our times.

Our theme is open-ended and allows for several interpretations. For me, one of its most attractive versions speaks to literature being written in our times, to explore how it helps us grapple with our moment in history, how it uses the language of our times. I am thinking here of Hindi writer Alka Sarawgi’s novel Kolkata Bypass which deftly combines the medical and transportational meanings of “bypass” to speak about the contemporary urban life in big cities choking upon themselves in more ways than one. The novel also imagines a time when seeds have stopped germinating in North America, invoking a crisis of human survival in that region and triggering fears of new imperial wars in the rest of the world. Such apocalyptic imaginings are quite prevalent in today’s literature, and I would give just one more example: that of P.D. James’ novel The Children of Men which opens with the news broadcast about the death of the last human being born on earth “in a pub brawl in a suburb of Buenos Aires, aged twenty-five years two months and twelve days.”

These two novels also demonstrate that the phenomenon of globalization has affected literature in as profound a way as it has other avenues of modern life. It is not just the transnational or diasporic writers who are writing beyond the nation. As events triggered in one place have global ramifications, whether it be epidemics or depleted uranium released by wars, literature too, can no longer be confined to what happens within national boundaries.

Unfortunately, the world book trade is so skewed that readers do not have access to the work of those writing outside the metropolis. A panel at the Hyderabad ACLALS conference had raised the issue of unavailability of the work of non-metropolitan writers and the effect it has on curriculum, our most potent tool for educating the young. A suggestion was made that ACLALS get into publishing and propagating the books that mainstream publishing does not care to print or to keep in print. It would be wonderful if ACLALS undertook such a venture. For if we are to remain at the mercy of the monopoly publishers, then the only

Arun Mukherjee, Vice-Chair
As current chair of EACLALS I attended the Civil Society Consultation in London last November. This was the second such meeting to have taken place in 2006 and it brought together representatives of the many Civil Society Organisations which are accredited to the Commonwealth (there are now 85 of them). ACLALS has now joined this gathering and finds itself in company with organisations working in extraordinarily diverse fields, from Human Ecology and Human Rights through Legal Education and Forestry to the AIDS Vaccine Initiative and Commonwealth Habitat. The meeting was also attended by delegates from the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Association of Commonwealth Universities, as well as by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

The meeting had a number of important aims: to update everyone on the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation, particularly with regard to their current focus on the mandates formulated at the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta (2005) relating to “Respect and Understanding” and the question of Commonwealth Membership; to host group discussions on such matters as the Commonwealth Education Ministerial Meeting in December 2006 which a number of delegates present would be attending, on responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic which now affects 25 million people within the Commonwealth, and on problems attendant on urbanisation, growing slums and global change. There was also an opportunity for a progress report on the next Commonwealth People’s Forum, which is to take place in the run-up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kampala in November 2007.

The focus on “Respect and Understanding” was triggered in part by the events of 9/11 and 7/7 [the London bombings] and is of particular concern to the Commonwealth, composed as it is of multi-racial and multi-faith societies. Pursuant to decisions taken in Malta a Commission has been set up to look into the causes of extremism and political violence, the establishment of successful communities and possible means of positive change. The Commission includes such eminent figures as the two Nobel Prize winners Amartya Sen and Wangari Mathari; the former vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Mamphele Ramphele; and the former Governor-General of Canada, Adrienne Clarkson. Debate focussed in part on where the question of faith fits into the work of the Commonwealth and whether the organisation should even be concerning itself with matters of faith at all. An illuminating talk by Prof. John Tomlinson of Nottingham Trent University on cultural understanding and the nature of cultural identity - in which he argued that in the modern, globalised world identities are plural and we all have a whole repertoire of overlapping identities - proved helpful for the discussion.

The issue of Commonwealth membership had, we were told, generated more input than any other topic. It is ten years since the last two members joined and it is now felt that the membership criteria should be reviewed, especially with regard to associate membership and observer status. The questions are somewhat complicated because they involve legal and financial aspects, the mode by which the Commonwealth is financed and particularly the differentiated contributions made by member states being perceived as in great need of revision. Two aspects of the membership question are worth noting: firstly, the lesson of Mozambique’s recent membership seems to be that membership on a regional basis can be a logical and useful way of accommodating the desire of other countries to join (this would apply particularly to Rwanda, which has a common ecology with neighbouring countries); and secondly, the criterion of historical association with the United Kingdom is perceived as less important than it once was. The whole question of membership and expansion is up for discussion at the next CHOGM.

The agenda topic which is no doubt of most interest to ACLALS members is that of the next Commonwealth People’s Forum, which is scheduled to take place in Kampala from 19-22 November, 2007. The overall theme of the CHOGM is finalised in consultation with the head of state of the host country, in this case President Museveni. At the time of the London meeting this had not been confirmed, but it was reported that the theme would be something like “Transforming Commonwealth Societies for Economic, Social and Human Development”. The currently proposed title of the People’s Forum is “Realising People’s Potential”. The preliminary sub-themes are to be: economic development; governance and participation; culture; environment, natural resources and sustainability; education for transformation, and health. There will be twelve workshops distributed across these themes, each of which will last one and a half days and involve four to five speakers; an invitation for proposals will be going out as soon as the themes are confirmed. At the meeting the Ugandan representative, Warren Nyamugasira, gave an interesting and convincing appraisal of the preparations underway and of the particular form the event would take, hosted as it will be this time by one of the poorer members of the Commonwealth. Central to his presentation were the notion of transformation and the hope that the People’s Forum would prove able to contribute to this. He wanted the participants in the Forum to leave a legacy in the country, to organise their workshops as collaborative ventures involving local people, to establish long-term partnerships with local organisations and to identify projects they can support. There would be an opportunity to establish grassroots contacts and to visit projects underway in the country. He was, it should be added, concerned both to allay any misgivings organisations might have about what he termed “democratic deficits” in the country and to emphasise that the whole CHOGM and CPF process is viewed with positive enthusiasm in the country.

As a final note it became clear in discussion with Andrew Firmin, whose portfolio in the Commonwealth Foundation is cultural diversity, that the Foundation would be supporting the upcoming ACLALS conference in Vancouver not only in the traditional form of a financial grant, but also in a most welcome innovation by facilitating attendance at the conference by some of the younger writers from developing countries whose work had won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize First Book Award.

Geoffrey V. Davis
EACLALS Chair
As planning for the Vancouver Conference continues, our conference website is updated to provide you with the information and details you will need as you make your plans to attend. Shortly, online registration will be available for early registration; event and program details, as well as local accommodations and visitor information, will follow.

[The ACLALS conference is pleased to be using Open Conference Systems. This web-based system, designed and developed by the Public Knowledge Project in British Columbia, allows conference organizers to manage all aspects of the conference, from the initial call for papers to registration and accommodations.]

Bookmark the site http://ocs.sfu.ca/aclals/index.php and check it frequently. I hope the site provides you with the information you need to make your attendance at the conference an enjoyable experience.

Bernett Ann Cody
Manager, Conference Website

Conference updates and other ACLALS messages are sent out on aclals@yahoogroups.com. To join, write “subscribe” in the subject line

Confirmed Speakers
(as of January 2007)

Derek Walcott
Sivakami Palanimuthu
Ngugi wa Thiong’o
Henry Giroux
Jeannette Armstrong
Robert Young
Stephen Slemon
Gauri Viswanathan
Dionne Brand
It does not seem so long ago that one talked in awe of the longevity of India’s great triumvirate of English-language novelists, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, who between them had notched up nearly three hundred years of life. I met them all, and though I knew Narayan the least well in person I always felt that in some ways I knew the inner man best of all, for his books were so intimate and so finely judged.

It was, therefore, with delight that I accepted an invitation from the Indian branch of the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS) and the Sahitya Akademi (the Indian National Academy of Letters) to a conference in celebration of the centenary of R.K.N.’s birth. This was, most aptly, held in Mysore, Narayan’s spiritual home which, almost every speaker assured us, was not to be identified as Malgudi, the invented setting of most of his fiction. Nevertheless, in the history of fiction is there another writer so rooted in one place who yet speaks with so international a voice? It was in appreciation of this that Professor Harish Trivedi, presiding genius of the conference organisational team, had successfully wooed to the conference not only some of the best critics in India but also scholars from Bangladesh, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.A.

In the three days of the conference no paper was given that was not worth hearing, and no accompanying event that did not throw light on Narayan’s life or art. We saw, for example, both of his homes in Mysore, where so many of his books were written. We had the good fortune to be shown one stunningly good episode of the television series of yesteryear, Malgudi Days, now re-issued on DVD, in the presence of Ms Padmavati, who had acted in, and helped to produce, the programmes. There were several generous personal tributes to Narayan the man, of which the most moving was the one by his old chum T. S. Satyan. For me, these sessions were worth crossing continents for.

The core of any conference is, of course, the collection of papers given. It seems unfair to name some and not others, when all twenty-seven were persuasive or thought-provoking in their own ways. On the first day, Shashi Deshpande gave a characteristically sharp-edged appraisal of a writer she assessed as good but not great. It was contributions such as this which prevented the conference from being hagiographical. And few would doubt that Lakshmi Holmstrom gave perhaps the most scholarly paper of all, on the issues involved in translating Narayan back into Tamil. I was especially glad to see mainland China represented at a Commonwealth literary conference, in the person of Wang Chunjing from the University of Peking.

Narayan was appraised from all angles, so that by the end of the conference a complex portrait had been painted of a truly variegated writer. In the process we saw demonstrated differing critical approaches, from pure theory to personal memoir, from Leavisite textual analysis to allegorical transmogrification. The book that will emerge from this conference will be a major addition to Indian literary studies, not only because it will be so comprehensive an evaluation of R.K. Narayan himself, but because it is likely to speak for the condition of fictional criticism today, stimulatingly diverse and strangely unsettled after the apparent certainties of only a decade ago.

Alastair Niven
aniven@cumberlandlodge@ac.uk

Conference Celebrating R.K. Narayan’s Centenary
Mysore, India

T.S. Satyan (right) showing Narayan’s old house to Harish Trivedi (centre) and others

Outside Narayan’s old house (with Alastair Niven at the back)
Word and Image in Colonial and Postcolonial Cultures.
Association for the Study of New English Literatures (ASNEL), University of Koblenz-Landau, May 24-27, 2006.

Images are central to postcolonial studies; in fact, much of the academic discourse within postcolonial studies concerns questions of representation, the manner in which images of other cultures are conveyed, and the nature of such images. This year’s ASNEL conference, organised by Michael Meyer, brought images to the foreground, focusing on the interplay of verbal and visual forms of representation.

In his opening keynote on "Reading Iconotexts: Observations on the Suplementarity of Verbal & Visual Representation", Peter Wagner discussed visual and verbal texts by William Hogarth, William Blake and Cormac McCarthy, which he presented as examples of various ways in which word and image interact. Despite taking his audience on a journey from the predominantly visual to the predominantly verbal, Wagner nonetheless stressed the impossibility of any clear distinction between visual and verbal forms of representation, and he argued in favour of the term iconotext for artefacts in which the visual and the verbal intermingle.

The keynote touched little on postcolonial issues, and as such it revealed one of the idiosyncrasies of this year’s conference. Through its wider appeal, the conference topic attracted researchers from fields other than postcolonial core areas, among them researchers who were completely new to postcolonial studies. As such, this year’s conference was highly successful in gathering a number of delegates attracted more by the specific conference topic than by the background of the association organising the conference, and hence in recruiting academics who might not normally have considered attending a conference on postcolonial literatures – an opportunity for the association both to increase its horizons and to present itself to non-members was a welcome effect.

Readings of individual texts again clearly dominated over the more general theorization, many of which were highly illuminating. Julika Griem (TU Darmstadt), for instance, linked visual studies with narratology by presenting various forms of visuality as intra- and extradiegetic, and she discussed Kipling’s colonial novel Kim and its postcolonial rewriting by Hari Kunzru, The Impressionist, through the complex interaction of ways of seeing in these two novels, paying particular attention to the glance and the gaze, as well as to the manner in which voyeurism is invited, redirected and denied in the texts.

Occupied with related issues, Renate Brosch (Potsdam), who also linked visual strategies with narratological techniques, showed how Peter Carey’s use of visual strategies in True History of the Kelly Gang discourages immersive reading and opens up the Ned Kelly myth to productive misreadings.

Visual strategies were only one of the many foci of the conference, among whose prime concerns was, of course, also the relationship between actual pictures and writing. Peter Marsden (Aachen) drew attention to the variety of ways in which paintings appear in the work of poet Peter Bland and, on a less specific level, raised the question of whether and how readers unfamiliar with the visual point of reference of a verbal text (can) make sense of the words without the image.

One step further towards the actual interaction of words and pictures, Michaela Moura-Kocoglu (Frankfurt) discussed multicultural children’s literature and traced a fascinating relation of supplementarity between words and illustration in first nation picture books, where word and picture are mutually dependent and both incomplete without the other.

Papers also focused on images more or less independent from verbal texts. Lars Eckstein (Tübingen) and Daniel Jaczminski (Bremen) both traced changing representations of Caliban in art and on stage. Other topics included Orientalist representations, comics and cartoons. In addition, film was a natural focus for this conference, and paper topics here ranged from Canadian, Australian, and British cinema to Hollywood and Bollywood. Given the number of different media discussed in the various papers, it was all the more deplorable that the actual “producers” of both verbal and visual texts were conspicuously underrepresented. The only writer present was Joan Barbara Simon, one of whose excellent readings was, unfortunately, not well advertised and took place in an environment perhaps not ideally suited to her performance.

Just as at previous years’ conferences, a teachers’ workshop offered a wide range of papers concerned with postcolonial literatures in the classroom. This year’s conference also featured a new session, entitled “Under Construction” organised by Susanne Reichl (Vienna) and geared towards establishing a forum for the discussion of research in progress.

Conference delegates were invited to present their research projects and share their ideas in two different forms: as posters during an extended coffee break or in a special session of short paper presentations and extended discussion.

Next year the association will bring together postcolonial and environmental criticism in a conference entitled “Local Natures, Global Responsibilities” in Jena (17-20 May 2007).

Ursula Kluwick (Vienna)
As an observer, standing in for Ranjini Mendis, International Chair of ACLALS, who was invited by the Commonwealth Consortium for Education to join their delegation, I attended the 16th Commonwealth Education Ministers (CEM). The conference was held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre located in the Central Business District (CBD), close to the famed tourist attractions and historic sites of the city. Within walking distance of the Waterfront, the Castle and District Six Museum and with a view of Table Mountain, delegates to the conference could literally move within minutes from the sobriety of statistics on education in the Commonwealth to any one of the beautiful sights of the city. And the various receptions and site visits to such places as Robben Island, the Spier Wine Estate, Kirstenbosch Gardens and so on ensured that delegates got as much entertainment as they could to punctuate the sessions that delegates got as much entertainment as they could to punctuate the sessions.

Within walking distance of the Waterfront, the Castle and District Six Museum and with a view of Table Mountain, delegates to the conference could literally move within minutes from the sobriety of statistics on education in the Commonwealth to any one of the beautiful sights of the city. And the various receptions and site visits to such places as Robben Island, the Spier Wine Estate, Kirstenbosch Gardens and so on ensured that delegates got as much entertainment as they could to punctuate the sessions that delegates got as much entertainment as they could to punctuate the sessions. The conference was really “five conferences rolled into one, with separate meetings for teachers, civil society organisations, businesses, and government officials.” With over a thousand delegates attending, it was truly a big conference, running concurrent sessions specifically for the various delegations such as the Teachers Forum, the Youth Forum, and the Stakeholders Forum. After the presentations and discussions at these fora, each of these groupings adopted its own statement at the end of the conference and these were presented to the Ministers Meeting.

For me - and I suppose for ACLALS members - what was most impressive about this conference was that it appeared to combine the usual fare of speeches from government officials and bureaucrats with those of some genuinely illuminating presentations on various aspects of education in the Commonwealth. Of particular interest to an organisation such as ACLALS will be the wealth of literature presented at the conference by way of documents on international student mobility in the Commonwealth, higher education and the State, higher education, globalisation and the marketplace, the importance of networking and collaborative partnerships, etc. ACLALS may wish to add its voice in these areas even if it is to focus only on the more specialised issue of language and literary education within the Commonwealth. Comparative data from various countries will help to indicate trends, and from these ACLAS may wish to develop a vision for the future.

Harry Garuba,
Cape Town Jan, 2007

The fourth international conference of the US chapter of ACLALS was held on the Santa Clara University campus 27-29 October 2006, on the theme “Fissures and Sutures: Sources of Division and Mutual Aid in Postcolonial Reflections on History and Literature.” The theme was partially commemorative of the hundredth anniversary of the great San Francisco earthquake and fire, and that devastation and subsequent rebuilding were emblematic of the many partitions and cooperative ventures that have followed colonialism. The conference was a great success, with 100 participants presenting papers in 24 panels, and keynote addresses and readings from Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Tess Onwueme, R. Radhakrishnan, Bill Ashcroft, Shu-mei Shih, Kalyan Ray and Amritjit Singh, with responses from Revathi Krishnaswamy, Neil Larsen, Rob Wilson, and Colleen Lye. We were fortunate in having speakers from outside the U.S., including eight from India. The conference was well-supported by local Universities and colleges. We are hoping to hold our next conference in a year or so, possibly at the University of California at Irvine or Santa Barbara.

John C. Hawley,
USAACLALS President

This year’s SAACLALS/AUETSA conference “Forging the Local and the Global” was held in Stellenbosch, near Cape Town, from the 9th to the 12th of July 2006, and was a resounding success. Fine keynote addresses were given by Meenakshi Mukherjee, Achille Mbembe and Isabel Hofmeyr to a large and diverse audience. SAACLALS managed to increase its membership from a paltry 16 or so to over 40, many of whom were international delegates. A Canadian attender is reported to have commented that: “I don’t think I’ve attended any conferences before which has been so well organized. Great food, drink at every event, even lunch - and splendid receptions. The organizer even brought us umbrellas when it rained!”. So, many thanks to Rob Garuba and his organising team for a very fine conference indeed. You can visit the website at www.sun.ac.za/english/localglobal2006. A journal of conference proceedings is in the pipeline.

Gerald Gaylard
SAACLALS Chair
## Statement of Financial Position

**ACLALS INTERNATIONAL**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

as at June 30, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prior</th>
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<td>$37,090</td>
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The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

## Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balances

**ACLALS INTERNATIONAL**

**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES**

for the year ended June 30, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prior</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues</strong></td>
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<td>Funds returned from branch</td>
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<td><strong>Fund balances, end of period</strong></td>
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<td>$35,905</td>
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The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.
# ACLALS INTERNATIONAL
## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the year ended June 30, 2006

### STATEMENT 3

#### General Fund

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<th>Sources of cash</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interest income</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash balances, beginning of year</td>
<td>$35,590</td>
<td>$35,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,590</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,905</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash balances, end of year</td>
<td><strong>$31,385</strong></td>
<td><strong>$37,090</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

1. All amounts are stated in Canadian dollars.
2. Revenue is in the form of grants from the Commonwealth Foundation and interest income and is recognized on receipt.

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### Message from the ACLALS Secretary Treasurer:

Hello Everyone,

The ACLALS Conference registration fees need to be paid by credit card through the conference website: http://ocs.sfu.ca/aclals/

Best wishes,
Paul Tyndall

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We thank Paul Matthew St. Pierre for his service to ACLALS and wish him all the best.

Ranjini Mendis
NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

On 14 November 2006, South Africa joined the Commonwealth Foundation as their 46th member. Professor Guido de Marco, Chairman of the Commonwealth Foundation, said: “It is a great pleasure for me to announce that the Republic of South Africa has decided to join the Foundation. South Africa plays a key role in African and global affairs, not only politically, but also through its cultural achievements and in the work of its civil society organisations. Our membership will benefit enormously from South Africa’s guidance, experience and support.”

Diana Brydon has moved to the University of Manitoba to take up a Canada Research Chair in Globalization and Cultural Studies. She is setting up a Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies. For more information, go to www.umanitoba.ca/centres/ges/

D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke was conferred Sahithyarathna, on September 18, 2006. The Sahithyarathna is the highest literary honour conferred annually on an eminent writer/person of letters in the Sinhala, Tamil and English languages by the Arts Council of Sri Lanka. It is based on an evaluation of the entire contribution s/he has made in his/her field to date, taking into account both publications and other services in the cause of literature.

Jointly organized by the Ca’ Foscari University of Venice and the University of Padua, the EACLALS 2008 Conference will take place in Venice (Italy) on 24-29 March 2008. The working title for this event is TRY FREEDOM: Rethinking Rights in/through Postcolonial Cultures. Further information will be made available in Call for Papers.

Rumina Sethi, Associate Professor in the Department of English, Panjab University, India, has been awarded the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship at the Rockefeller Centre in Italy.

A human rights complaint launched against the federal government’s Canada Research Chairs Program by eight female professors in Canada, including ACLALS member/a former President of CACLALS, Wendy Robbins, was settled in mid-November. As a result, the program will undergo analyses to ensure its selection processes are non-discriminatory. Canadian universities will also be required to establish targets for the representation of equity-seeking groups.

Recent Publications:


Ledent, Benedicte ed. Caryl Phillips Special Issue (Forthcoming) Moving Worlds 7:1 Moving Worlds, School of English, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT Email: mworlds@leeds.ac.uk Website: www.movingworlds.net


Sethi, Rumina Myths of the Nation (OUP Clarendon), South Asian Edition through OUP New Delhi.


Quebécité

A new issue of Postcolonial Text, Vol 2 No 4 (2006) was published in December 2006. You are invited to visit the journal’s web site (http://postcolonial.org) and click “Current” to have a look at this issue’s articles, book reviews, and interviews - all freely available on an open access basis. We invite new submissions for our future issues.

Ranjini Mendis
Co-founding Managing Editor, Postcolonial Text
CALLS FOR PAPERS

“Worlds, Texts, Critics”
Autea/Saanais/Saval Conference
8-11 July 2007
University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban

In a combined spirit of homage and debate, the 2007 conference takes its theme from the title of a collection of essays by the late Edward Said. While no critical consensus on Said's views is presupposed, participants are invited to speculate on the “worldliness” of texts as both deliberate aesthetic elaborations and as material ensembles which are at once enabled and constrained by complicated informing contexts. We invite papers which explore these webs of 'worldliness'. Deadline: January 31st 2007

Matthew Shum (Conference Organizer)
shum@ukzn.ac.za
http://academic.sun.ac.za/english/AUET
SA2007/home.html

“Local Natures, Global Responsibilities”
Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures of English (ASNEL) Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena, May 17-20, 2007

In many New Literatures in English nature has long been an issue of paramount importance: the environmental devastation brought about by colonial regimes has often continued or even intensified in postcolonial times, and global ecological hazards often have particularly disastrous consequences for the most vulnerable parts of the world's population. At the same time, far-reaching social and cultural transformations have also led to changed perceptions and representations of nature in postcolonial cultures and literatures.

The 2007 ASNEL conference aims at contributing to the global debate on nature and the environment by highlighting how local natures are culturally constructed and how insights into different forms or concepts of nature in literary texts and other (“old” or “new”) media can contribute to a greater sense of global responsibility. We therefore invite contributions examining the multifarious implications of the connection of “local natures and global responsibilities” in post-colonial cultures and the New Literatures in English. For topics and further details, please refer to the conference website. The deadline for abstracts is 31st January 2007.

“Try Freedom: Rewriting Rights in/through Postcolonial Cultures”
Venezia
24-29 March 2008

The 2008 EACLALS triennial conference is jointly organized by the University of Padua, Ca' Foscari University, Venice, and Venice International University.

Conference theme
The modern idea of freedom and human and civil rights, as well the notion of modernity itself, have been repeatedly (con)test and hotly debated in the 20th century, in response to new theories, needs, and changes in the contemporary world situation. The spread of fundamentalisms and the dramatic developments in what has been perceived as a new phase of confrontation between the western world and 'its others' are holding in check those who have seen in the postcolonial, postnational global context and in the attainment of fluid or hybrid identities the projection of a dream of universal democracy. Although we live in an increasingly mobile world of migratory flows and transnational movement, frontiers have become less and less negotiable, and freedom as a universally accepted human value is undergoing a deep crisis. Repeated threats to freedom of speech and creative expression have affected also the world of literature and the arts, which nevertheless continue to respond creatively to these tensions.

The aim of the conference is to explore and articulate the interest of postcolonialism in the discourses of freedom and human, civil and cosmopolitical rights. It encourages a rethinking of postcolonial theory's traditional emphasis on the ethics of engagement in view of the conceptual inputs of new theoretical approaches; it promotes reflections on how to practice postcolonial pedagogies in an increasingly uncivil public sphere; and above all it invokes culturally diversified responses to these questions from the literatures and the arts (theatre, dance, painting, sculpture, cinema...) of the postcolonial world. The overall effort involves active inter-disciplinary dialogue and speakers across a range of academic disciplines.

We welcome proposals on any of the following topics, or others related to the theme of the conference:
- The theoretical freedom of many postcolonialisms:
- Literatures and liberties
- Contextualizing and historicizing liberties
- Comparing empires and freedoms
- Sacred rights
- The right to (changing) identities
- The right to knowledge and information
- The freedom to move
- Academic freedom

For further details, see EACLALS website: http://www.ulg.ac.be/facphl/uer/d-german/eaclals.html

Please send a 250-word abstract of your proposed paper by 1 September 2007 to Annalisa Oboe (University of Padua) and Shaul Bassi (University of Venice) at the following email address:
eaclals2008.dlages@unipd.it

“The Colonial Present:
Australian Writing for the 21st Century”
Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature
The University of Queensland, July 1-4 2007

At the beginning of a new century, Australian literature reflects on a controversial past and an uncertain future in which its traditional allegiances are being variously supplemented and replaced. The conference explores the temporal continuum of a past that ‘is not even past’, and the austral convergences of literatures across the Southern hemisphere. Proposals for 20-minute papers are invited to address the following themes:

- legacies, complicities and implications across the South
- transnational and postcolonial frame works in current criticism
- the role of testimony, memoir and life narrative
- the presence of poetry
- the historical novel and millennial writing.

Offers of papers from postgraduate students are welcome. Please send a 300 word abstract along with a brief bio by 23 February 2007 to Gillian Whitlock at g.whitlock@uq.edu.au or Chris Tiffin at C.Tiffin@uq.edu.au.

ASAL website: www.asc.uq.edu.au/asal/
On the morning of 8th July 2006, Raja Rao passed away at the age of ninety seven years and nine months. He was truly one of the great writers of the 20th century. His life not only overlapped almost the entire century, but his works engaged with all its major events and intellectual cross-currents.

His first novel, *Kanthapura* (1938) told the story of India's independence in the Harikatha style of narration. Raja Rao, long before Salman Rushdie, knew the difficulties and challenges of capturing Indian experience in the English language. For *Kanthapura*, which was written in Montpellier, France, he invented an English which had the flavour of Kannada. Both its narrator and arguably its chief protagonist were women, both widows. In style and substance, *Kanthapura* was epoch making.

Rajo Rao next published some important non-fiction works - *Changing India: An Anthology* (1939) and *Whither India?* (1948), co-edited with Iqbal Singh, also Nehru's *Soviet Russia: Some Random Sketches and Impressions* (1949), which he edited. These, and his more recently-published non-fiction, including *The Meaning of India*, show his active involvement with the making of India.

His next work of fiction was a collection of short stories written in the 1930s. Published as *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories* (1947), many of these stories, like “Javni”, are classics, still taught in universities today. *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), undoubtedly one of the greatest Indian English works, followed. After this came the small, charming, but deeply meaningful *The Cat and Shakespeare: A Tale of India* (1965). *Comrade Kirillov*, published in 1976, was a slight but incisive book, prophesying the demise of communism.

His next great novel *The Chessmaster and His Moves* (1988) won him the Neustad Prize. The metaphysical terrain of *The Serpent and the Rope* is revisited elaborately in *Chessmaster*. This voluminous work ponders the universal sorrow and the human condition. The solution is not so much the realisation of the self, but its dissolution, the sheer vertical plunge into the Absolute rather than the painstaking, slow, accumulative, and maybe impossible quest for infinity. In fact, this novel is only the first of a trilogy whose remaining volumes remain unpublished.

A small even frail man, Raja Rao lived life on a grand scale. If his story were to be told in celluloid, it would be a 70mm film, with an international star cast, and spanning three continents. It would show a handsome young Brahmin arriving in Paris in the late 1920s, marrying Camille Mouly, a French professor much older than him, giving up his PhD to pursue a writing career. Later, the marriage would break up and Raja Rao would return to India to look for a guru. After a decisive event, Raja Rao finally found him, in Atmananda Guru in Kerala.

Raja Rao then moved to the U.S. where he taught philosophy at the University of Texas. His classes were very popular. He was known to walk into the lecture theatre filled with 250 young, inquisitive minds and say, "You may ask me any question you like." He was married a second time, to Catherine Jones and had a son, Christopher Rama. But this marriage also ended in divorce. Married a third time, to Susan, who was his faithful companion and a loving nurse in his last years, he lived as a recluse, in a small apartment on Pearl Street.

Raja Rao considered his writing a sadhana, a spiritual discipline. Reading him is also a sadhana. Like that of the great Russian writers Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, his fiction pushes us deeper and higher into ourselves. “I am a man of silence,” he said, “The word seems to come first as an impulsion from the nowhere, and then as a prehension, and it becomes less and less esoteric - till it begins to be concrete. And the concrete becoming ever more earthy, and the earthy communicated, as the common word, alas seems to possess least of that original light.”

Raja Rao has returned to the silence whence he came, merging into that light, that sacred luminosity that he managed to capture in words.

Makarand Paranjape