The advantages of a peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access journal published online emerge from the observation that with the development of new media technology it is in the interest of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences to employ new media technology and thus online publishing. The world wide web on represents a viable venue to serve the dissemination and transfer of knowledge to the benefit of scholarship, the individual scholar, as well as the general public in open access.

As associate director of the University of Alberta RICL: Research Institute for Comparative Literature, in 1995 Steven Tótösy de Zepetnek built a world wide web home page for the Institute for information and research in comparative literature, including material such as an international directory of comparatists, various bibliographies, a collection of relevant links, and a webpage of information about the University of Alberta Department of Comparative Literature. The RICL web site existed online on the server of the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts at (<http://www.ualberta.ca/ARTS/ricl.html>) from July 1995 to September 1998. In September 1998 Tótösy de Zepetnek began with the organization of a peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access journal in the humanities and social sciences published online and in March 1999 the new journal, CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture went online on the server of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Alberta at (<http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/clcwebjournal>). Material available previously on the RICL website were carried over to the Purdue University Press CLCWeb Library Series at (<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/library>), Of note is that the webpage of the University of Alberta Department of Comparative Literature underwent several mergers and reconstructions and as of 2000 is located—as a Programme of Comparative Literature, thus not a full-fledged department (on this, see <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/riclhistory>)—in the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts Programme of Interdisciplinary Studies.

To begin with, the background of CLCWeb's founding is as follows. From 1989 to 1997, first as assistant later as associate director of RICL, Tótösy de Zepetnek’s tasks included as assistant and later as associate editor the publication of the CRCL/RCLC: Canadian Review of Comparative Literature / Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée (published by the Canadian Comparative Literature Association / Association Canadienne de Littérature Comparée) and the editorship of a print monograph series published by RICL. In 1989, when appointed as assistant editor of CRCL/RCLC and at which time the publication of the journal has been three years late owing to the lack of funding, Tótösy de Zepetnek converted—with the assistance of Faculty of Arts technologist Terry Butler and several graduate students assigned to Tótösy de Zepetnek—the publication of CRCL/RCLC to the desktop mode using word processing in wordperfect and bitstream fonts for camera-ready copy printed on a laser printer. The expertise acquired during the years of publishing the journal from editing, the procedures and processes of evaluation of manuscripts, the journal's finances including its marketing and the writing of grant applications, the training of comparative literature graduate students as editorial assistants in editing and all technical aspects of desktop publishing have proven invaluable and of benefit to CRCL/RCLC, the Department of Comparative Literature, the graduate student trainees, and Tótösy de Zepetnek. It is in this period that new media technology allowed for much innovation in scholarly publishing such as the conversion of CRCL/RCLC from traditional printing processes (expensive and cumbersome) to desktop publishing resulting in the reduction of the costs of the journal's publication by up to 80 per cent. In addition, graduate students assigned to the journal to be trained in all aspects of the journal's publication gained marketable skills and from the several dozen editorial assistants over the years a good number found work in the publishing industry in Canada and elsewhere, part time and full time. By the mid-1990s the world wide web burst on the scene and in 1995 Tótösy de Zepetnek placed material for work in comparative literature on the website of the Research Institute for Comparative Literature at (<http://www.ualberta.ca/ARTS/ricl.html>) (the website was active 1995 to 1998). In 1997 Tótösy de Zepetnek
resigned from CRC/LRLC and decided to take advantage of new media technology and the world wide web to start a new journal for comparative literature and (comparative) cultural studies: the objective of a new journal publishing world wide was to create a forum where the direction would focus on the tenets of comparative literature with tenets of the field of cultural studies. And last but not least, the founding of an online journal allowed Tótösy de Zepetnek's commitment to the humanities where access to knowledge is free to anyone and anywhere with a computer and internet connection. Indeed, the publication of a peer-reviewed, full-text, and open access in the humanities and comparative literature in general, and in cultural studies in particular remains exceptional in that among the large number of online journals in the humanities worldwide there are less than a handful such published in open access, in full text, and peer reviewed. For a discussion of the relevance of publishing humanities scholarship digitally in open access without subscription fees and/or author's publication fees, see Tótösy de Zepetnek, Steven, “Digital Publishing: A Lesson from the CRCL/RCLC,” CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 16.1 (2014): http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2426.

After consultation with colleagues at universities in a number of countries, it became obvious that the launching of an online journal would make sense indeed and that such a journal would fill a gap on the landscape of scholarship in the humanities understood broadly and including (comparative) literature, cultural studies, media, cultural and communications studies, and related disciplines. In consequence, an international advisory board of the journal was made up by invitation, application for an ISSN number was processed with and obtained from the National Library of Canada (1481-4374), the listing, archiving, and mirroring of the new online journal with the National Library of Canada—in 2004 renamed Library and Archives Canada with the archive of the journal at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/electroniccollection/>—has been arranged, etc. After invitations to colleagues to participate in the launching of the journal with articles and after the evaluations and the editing process of the papers received, the first issue of CLCWeb was published online 1 March 1999. The University of Alberta Faculty of Arts server provided the URL and the necessary server space for the web location of the journal; the University's Help Desk and the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts Technologies for Learning Centre (TLC) at <http://www.ualberta.ca/TLC> provided occasional technical help for the journal and its functions such as the moderated listerv of the journal.


Pubishing Services

Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI-AHCI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is member of The Council of Editors of Learned Journals (USA), it is listed in DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals, it is archived in the Electronic Collection of Library and Archives Canada and mirrored on the website of the British Comparative Literature Association, it is preserved in the Portico and CLOCKSS systems for archival preservation of born-digital scholarly content and in the Library of Congress, and articles in the journal are published with Digital Object Identifier numbers by the International DOI Foundation. Articles published in the journal are subject to copyright release if re-published in any form including translation in the amount of $250.00 payable to Purdue University Press. CLCWeb is listed and linked to electronic directories and in the pages of online resources of university libraries worldwide.

During its inception in Canada and start-up of CLCWeb including all technical aspects such as the design of its index page occurred without external or internal funding. Attempts have been made to obtain funding from Canada's SSHRC: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (new technology and learned journals program). However, the SSHRC insisted that CLCWeb, similar to the requirements for traditional print journals: you have 200 paid subscribers, the journal is online and in the open access did not carry weight. And the argument of the high web traffic by unique users of the journal already with only two issues online or the argument to accept the "hits" on and "session use" of the journal's material in lieu of paid subscriptions as a demonstration of its use in the scholarly community did not persuade the SSHRC to consider. The University of Alberta Department of Comparative Literature was not in a position to donate a "personal effort" and no financial support or support "in kind" such as graduate student assistantships were offered although the Department expressed intellectual and moral support for the journal. As far as the Department was concerned, the said situation re the journal was deemed appropriate because the Department felt it would not be able to carry the two journals at the same time at the Department and CLCWeb housed in the Center.

By January 2000, following considerations of and plans for the development of CLCWeb and its legitimization in the world of scholarship, in cooperation with the journal's international advisory board possibilities were explored to...
relocate the journal from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta to a university press. After several months of contacts, e-mail exchanges, and discussions with up to a dozen university presses and virtual libraries in the U.S., Canada, and Europe, the editorial board and the director of Purdue University Press (http://www.thepress.purdue.edu)—Thomas Bacher—approved the relocation to Purdue University and the publishing of CLCWeb by Purdue University Press ©Purdue University. Purdue's decision has been far-sighted for several reasons. All other presses and even those who expressed avid interest to host and publish the journal completely interested upon the journal remained in the mode of open access (in all cases it suggested that the journal would have to be published in the pay-subscription mode). Purdue accepted the argumentation that CLCWeb should remain in the open-access mode because of principles applicable to humanities and social sciences and their social relevance, the notion of the internet and the web as a democratic vector of globalization of knowledge, communication, and knowledge production. Of course, the question of funding if all online journals were in the mode of open access is valid and an issue debated continuously. However, the argumentation for open-access online journals in the humanities and social sciences includes the proposition that income for the Press by offering CLCWeb in the open-access mode is generated by brand recognition for Purdue University Press and Purdue University based on the high traffic web of CLCWeb. With issue 2.3 (September 2000) CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture is published by Purdue University Press ©Purdue University.

As a peer-reviewed forum of scholarship and in a form that combines traditional scholarship and practices and new media scholarship and technology, the journal offers the possibility of training and involvement in the study of the humanities in general and in comparative culture and media in the particular. Thus, owing to the nature of new media scholarship and publishing, editorial assistants of the journal can be located physically anywhere. For these reasons of service to the humanities and the profession and of course as assistance needed in the work of the journal, CLCWeb appoints junior faculty and advanced graduate student editorial assistants and book review article editors for periods of renewable terms of one academic year (for the tasks of such appointees link to http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebaims). The appointment of graduate student and junior faculty editorial assistants and book review article editors is under ongoing consideration.

The article style of the journal—specific (see at http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebstyleguide)—while in principle the journal's style follows the current MLA: Modern Language Association of America parenthetical sources and works cited style, deviations from this style are included, for example, no footnotes or endnotes, no titles with sub-titles, and no epigrams or mottos. The reasons for this include: because of searches on the world wide web it is imperative to make the title of an article as clear and precise as possible and hence metaphorical titles—much loved in humanities scholarship—proves counter-productive for the finding of material; the requirement of no footnotes or end notes is for the reason that what cannot be said in the main text should not be in the article, as well as for the reason that the journal—as an online publication—encourages reading on the computer screen and no printing and the reading of text on screen with footnotes or end notes would make reading cumbersome; the not allowing of epigrams or mottos at the beginning of articles relates to one of the principles of the journal's aims & scope, namely the contextual (systemic and empirical) approach which, by definition, is against the essayistic writing in/of scholarship. Authors' profiles with articles in the journal also have a specific format in that ranks, titles, awards, or honoraria are not listed; instead, the format is first name, surname "teaches X at X university" followed by areas of research followed by two-three examples of publications (title of publication, title of journal or book, and year of publication), and the institutional email address of the author.

2) International Advisory Board, Book Review Editors, and Editorial Assistants of CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebboards>


3) Statistical profile of scholarship published in CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture (see Cumulative Index of CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 1999-current).<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebindex>

The statistics of the journal's readership 1999-2007 when the journal was published in html showed unusually high readership with the average number of 7000 hits per day with the correspondingly high number of page views (i.e., actual time spent reading online) and since the pdf format of the journal 2007- the download count of publications in the journal continue to show a large readership: download counts are listed on each article's abstract page. For example, in 2010 there have been 105.304, in 2011 255.377, in 2012 275.000, in 2013 375.000, in 2014 415.000, and in 2015 313.429 downloads. The total download of articles since the pdf format of the journal 2007- is over 1.9 million. Of note is the downloading work to convert all material of the journal from its .html format 1999-2007 to word files for the new presentation of publications 2007- in pdf. The conversion of html files to word for publication by the Berkeley Electronic Press on behalf of Purdue University (the system converts word files automatically to pdf)—was assisted 2006-2007 by the journal's editorial assistants Shun-liang Chao (University College London), Györgyi Horváth (Balassi Institute), Jinhua Li (Purdue University), Agata Anna Lisiak (University of Halle-Wittenberg), Terri Ochiaga (Complutense University Madrid), and Shaojing Wu (Purdue University) and technical assistance was provided by Meaghan Sinclair (Northeastern University). A second remaking of the journal occurred in 2014-2015 when the front and abstract page of each article published since 1999 was redone and this was performed by CLCWeb editorial assistant Luyang Wang on a graduate student assistantship funded by Purdue's Program of Comparative Literature.

4) CLCWeb Library Series <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebindex>
In addition to articles and book review articles, the journal publishes research material in its Library Series (articles, bibliographies, books, research material, and documents).

5) CLCWeb listserv
The journal operates a moderated listserv for news and announcements in comparative literature and culture with 8-12 postings per calendar year of news with call for papers for conferences and publications. Subscribers to the listserv are 1000+ worldwide. Items for posting are invited to the journal at <clcweb@purdue.edu>.

6) CLCWeb annual reports <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcwebannualreports>
The editor of the journal submits annual reports about the activities of the journal and the Purdue University Press print and ebook monograph book series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies (see below 8) to the International Advisory Board of the journal, its editors, and Purdue University Press 1999-current.

7) Webdesign of and technical support for CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 1998-2002 the webdesign in html was performed by the editor of the journal, 2002-2006 technical assistance with matters webdesign and systems operations were provided by University of Halle-Wittenberg Media and Communication Studies new media Technologies Florian Martting (2002-2003), Rasmus Schwinglemmer (2003-2004), Michael Ginosal (2003-2005), and Clemens Krebs (2004-2006). With the migration of the journal to the journal-publishing platform Digital Commons at Purdue with The Berkeley Electronic Press as of 2007 technical support is provided by The Berkeley Electronic Press <http://www.bepress.com/>. The journal and all its functions in the CLCWeb Series and its moderated listserv news and announcements in comparative literature and culture are supported and assisted in the technical domain by Purdue University Libraries and on behalf of Purdue University Press by The Berkeley Electronic Press.

8) Purdue University Press print & ebook monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies <http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/comparative-cultural-studies>
Since 2002 the journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press print monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Books in the series are published in print and in electronic format (MUSE <http://muse.jhu.edu/browse/publishers/purdue_univ PRESS>). Single-book authors of volumes in the series are required to publish an excerpt of the book in the journal because this increases the sale of books published in the series. The series itself is successful in that when the average number of books in the humanities sold in the U.S.
rarely exceeds 150-200 copies, all books in the series—after the initial print run of 150 copies—have been reprinted and in many cases followed by a third reprint. The series is distributed in the U.S./Canada, as well as in Europe, and its volumes are listed in Amazon sites (U.S., Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom). From among mid-stream ranked authors—about 1/3 of authors with books in the series—several received tenure owing to publication of their work in the series.

9) logo of CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture

The journal’s logo—cherries—symbolize openness and accommodation, the active recognition of the Other in multiple and reverse directions, and, by extension in our case scholarship of social relevance for a better world. Across cultures, cherries symbolize a variety of characteristics, for example, in ancient China cherries are a symbol of immortality, in Japan they represent beauty, courtesy, and modesty, in Western cultures they symbolize wisdom, hard work, love, and happiness or a symbol of the fleeting quality of life’s pleasures, in dreams they can symbolize honesty and truthfulness, or, in contemporary Western popular culture they symbolize sexuality and womanhood, and cherries are popular in Central and East Europe where in literature and the visual arts cherries are a frequent motif.