

CALL FOR PAPERS

XIII CLAI BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

On

Comparative Literature: At the Crossroads of Culture and Society

March 6-8, 2017

Organized by

Centre for Comparative Literature, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

in collaboration with

Comparative Literature Association of India

Concept Note

‘Comparative Literature’, ‘culture’, ‘society’ – these terms have been used frequently in contemporary academic discourses that stem from the drive towards “interdisciplinarity” without addressing the tools to map the available reference points within a particular socio-cultural milieu. Our focus in this conference is to examine the inter-relation of these concepts from the perspective of comparative studies in literature(s) and culture(s).

The development of Comparative Literature in India and elsewhere as an academic discipline has been continuously shaped by certain socio-political events, like Bangabanga, World War II, Cold War, (to name a few). These events are linked with socio-cultural phenomena like “multiculturalism” (Bernheimer, *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*), “globalization” (Saussy, *Comparative Literature in the Age of Globalization*), as well as disciplines/concepts like Cultural Studies, Translation Studies, World Literature and – perhaps the latest – Comparative Cultural Studies. Does Comparative Literature mean merely comparing two texts from two different socio-cultural milieus? What is the value of language as a sign system and as a creative tool, in such an Endeavour? In a multilingual situation, how can language as a major socio-cultural index (beyond oral/written) become a significant point of departure in understanding the negotiations mentioned above, is our primary concern.

The conference seeks to delve deep into this anxiety and explore the precise links – if any – between the practice of Comparative Literature and the location of the practitioner. Do the needs of the comparatist influence the means and methods and if so, how? As a practice, Comparative Literature opens itself to such internal questions and we would like to explore the relations between the different ways of practice and their locations – comparing the comparativism that arises in different locations.

If Comparative Literature as a perspective allows itself to “change”, ‘comparativism as an ethics’ allows us to take into our pedagogy and our practice its commitment to understanding the other with the humility and the willingness to change in the face of difference. Difference in language to start with and then extending our “understanding” around, gender, caste, class, ethnicity, religion, location and many more. Standing at this historical conjuncture, we feel the need to bring this discussion to bear upon both disciplinary expectations and “interdisciplinarity”.

We invite focused and analytical papers which would address these theoretical complexities and enrich our understanding of the points of intersections between Comparative Literature and culture/ society.

Sub-themes:

- Comparative Literature: Theory, Practice
- Re-thinking Visvasahitya/ Rabindranath and Comparative Literature
- Towards Indian Comparative Literature
- Comparative Literature and Translation Studies

- Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies
- Comparative Literature in the Age of Digital Humanities
- Rethinking Individual and Society
- Comparative Aesthetics
- Literary Theory and Comparative Literature
- Endangered Languages and Cultures/ Indigenous Knowledge Systems 3
- Feminist Theory and Art/ Feminist Cultural Production
- Theorizing Multiculturalism/ Globalization
- Art and Censorship
- Literature and Political Writings
- The Politics of the 'Virtual' Society
- South Asian Culture and Literature (special session relating to ICLA Standing Committee for Research relating to this area: Coordinators: Prof. Chandra Mohan and Prof. E.V. Ramakrishnan)

Submission of abstracts:

Abstracts (300 words, maximum) of papers, related to the broad theme of the Conference, are invited from students/ scholars/ teachers of Comparative Literature.

Authors should mention clearly their name and affiliation and the title of the paper. The broad areas mentioned are only suggestive. Presentation time will be 15-20 minutes.

Abstracts should be sent to: cclvbu@gmail.com. The deadline for submission of abstract is January 14, 2017, midnight (IST). Please note that we will be unable to consider abstracts received beyond these dates. Abstracts can be in Bangla, English, Hindi, Assamese, Odia, Marathi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Urdu, Santhali, Indo-Tibetan, Russian, Italian, French, German, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese.

If selected, participants will have to translate their abstracts (where relevant) and subsequently papers, into English for circulation. All abstracts will be sent for double-blind peer-review and selected participants will receive an acceptance letter by January 30, 2017. In order to participate in the conference, the selected scholars will have to send their complete papers by February 15, 2017.

Registration: On receiving the acceptance letter, participants should send a demand draft in favour of the Accounts Officer, Visva-Bharati by February 15, 2017.

Registration: (within February 15, 2017)

For outstation participants (teachers and research scholars) requiring accommodation (shared): Registration Fee - Rs.3000/- (includes accommodation for max. 4 nights, from the afternoon of March 5 to morning of March 9, 2017; 4 dinners, 4 breakfasts, 3 working lunches, conference kit).

For outstation participants (students) requiring accommodation (shared): Rs.2000/- (includes accommodation for max. 4 nights, from the afternoon of March 5 to morning of March 9, 2017; 4 dinners, 4 breakfasts, 3 working lunches, conference kit)

For participants not requiring accommodation: Rs.1500/- (includes 3 working lunches, one conference dinner, conference kit)

For foreign participants requiring accommodation (single): \$200 (to be paid in Indian currency equivalent) (includes accommodation for max. 4 nights, from the afternoon of March 5 to morning of March 9, 2017; 4 dinners, 4 breakfasts, 3 working lunches, conference kit)

For SAARC participants requiring accommodation (shared): Rs 3,000 (to be paid in Indian currency equivalent) (includes accommodation for max. 4 nights, from the afternoon of March 5 to morning of March 9, 2017; 4 dinners, 4 breakfasts, 3 working lunches, conference kit)

For foreign participants not requiring accommodation: \$150 (includes 3 working lunches, one conference dinner, and conference kit)

Please note that CLAI will not accept payment in cash. The selected papers presenters must send their drafts within the deadline mentioned in their acceptance letter.

Best Paper Award to Students at the Conference (TWO)

Since 2015, the Comparative Literature Association of India has been offering two prizes at its annual conferences, one for the best paper presented by an MA student from any literature discipline, and one for the best paper presented by a research student at the M. Phil and Ph D level in Comparative Literature. Participants under the age of 35, registered for MA, M. Phil and PhD courses in Indian and foreign universities are eligible to compete, provided:

- (1) They indicate their desire to compete when submitting the abstract.
- (2) Submit proof of studentship along with the abstract.

Once notified that their abstract has been selected for inclusion in the conference programme, MA, M. Phil and PhD students wishing to compete must submit the complete paper within the date mentioned above. Six papers (three from each category) will be shortlisted for presentation at a special session of the conference. Selection of shortlisted candidates will be on the basis of blind review of papers received by an expert committee. Final selection of two best papers will be on the basis of the papers received followed by the presentation of the shortlisted papers at the special session.

Transport: Nearest rail station to Santiniketan is Bolpur, and nearest airport is Kolkata international airport. Participants who want pick up from Bolpur station should inform the date and time of their arrival by February 25, 2017.

Important Dates

Submission of abstracts:	January 14, 2017
Communication of acceptance:	January 30, 2017
Deadline for receipt of registration drafts and full papers:	February 15, 2017

Contacts: For any further queries, the following may be contacted:

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