

**XXII<sup>nd</sup> CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
ASSOCIATION: 29 JUL 19 – 02 AUG 19**

The XXII<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) will be held at the University of Macau, from 29 Jul 19 to 02 Aug 19. The details of the congress are available at <http://icla2019.medmeeting.org/8045?lang=en>.

The main theme of the 2019 Congress will be: **Literature of the World and the Future of Comparative Literature** with the following sub-themes:

1. Conversations across Differences
2. Diverse Languages of Comparison
3. Literary, Cultural, and Temporal (Un)Translatability
4. The Multiple Histories of Comparative Literature
5. Canons, Genres, and Media
6. Interdisciplinarity in Comparative Literature
7. Theorizing the Literary across Cultures
8. World Literature and China
9. Global Humanities from an Eastern Perspective
10. Internationalization of Chinese Literary Studies
11. Immigrant Literature
12. Circulation of Information in East Asia: Journalism, Fiction, and Electronic Textuality
13. The “Sinophone” as a Counterdiscourse
14. Memoir Literature in East Asia in the Modern Period
15. The Obsession With International Literary Prizes: For Whom Is the Reward Important?

The date for submission of individual as well as panel proposals is **31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**.

## Proposals

Proposals can be of two kinds:

**Individual proposals** to be arranged by the organizing committee into groups as Congress sessions, and **Panel proposals** that are composed of at least 4 speakers, and a large group of panel presentations on one theme can be arranged as several linked panels on several days. Those who propose panels should be responsible for contacting speakers and organizing the panel or panels in groups.

## Method for submission of abstract

Proposals have to be submitted online at [icla2019.medmeeting.org](http://icla2019.medmeeting.org).

For submission of abstracts, registration at the icla site is required. Abstracts are required to be of a maximum 1000 words with a few keywords. Select bibliography has to be provided, which is exclusive of the 1000 words. Original abstract must be uploaded in doc/docx/rar/pdf/zip format with a maximum size of 5 MB.

## Registration Fees

The details of registration fees for the congress is given below: -

	Early Bird (by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 19)	Regular (by 31 May 19)	Late (After 31 May 19)
Professional	HKD 1,300	HKD 1,400	HKD 1,500
Student	HKD 650	HKD 700	HKD 750

### Note:-

1. All registration fees are payable in Hong Kong Dollar (HKD) only.
2. All registration fees include welcome reception, daily transportation from Official Hotel to Congress Venue, coffee breaks and access to all the technical sessions.
3. Only online payment will be accepted, which is available to settle at the user portal - <http://icla2019.medmeeting.org/UserEN/Info/8045>. For alternative, please contact the Conference Secretariat.
4. To enjoy the student rate, a copy of student ID is required.

### Cancellation Policy:

Unfortunately, all registration fees are **non-refundable** and **non-transferable**.

List of already approved panels is available at:<https://icla2019.medmeeting.org/Content/119479>.

## **South Asian Literature as World Literature: Issues of Recognition, Reception and Resistance**

The subject for a special panel in the forthcoming ICLA Congress 2019 at Macau during 29 July-02 August, 2019.

### Concept Note

The research group for the study of South Asian cultures and literatures affiliated to International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) is mandated to explore the linguistic, literary and cultural diversity of South Asia as reflected in its multiple artistic, literary and philosophical texts and traditions. The scholars of the panel with first-hand knowledge of South Asian social and cultural terrains, will critically evaluate the canon and its continuing relevance, while taking note of emerging trends in various literary genres, films, theatre and theoretical studies. The studies undertaken will lead us to a better understanding of the region in the context of the fast-paced globalization of the region.

The subject for the forthcoming ICLA Congress 2019 has been chosen with a view to study the implications of globalization of culture from multiple perspectives. In what sense can “South Asian Literature” be described as “World Literature”? Needless to say, ‘world literature’ is a contested term with its own ideological baggage. By juxtaposing it with ‘South Asian Literature’ we intend to problematize its multiple trajectories and highlight the irreducible plurality as a condition that defines the South Asian literary context.

South Asia is home to almost one third of the world languages. Written literature emerged in some of the South Asian languages long before it made its appearance in other parts of the world. Hence several of modern Indian languages such as Bengali, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Urdu,

Punjabi, Marathi and Malayalam are to be seen as 'world languages'. Besides, most of the so-called 'world languages' such as English, French, Chinese, Persian and Arabic have a strong presence in many parts of South Asia. Major works have also been composed in these languages by South Asian authors. In that sense, South Asia constitutes a pluralistic world with no parallel in the rest of the continents. Any literary history of South Asia will have to explore the implications of multilingualism and inter-textuality between several languages before a working model can be evolved.

While studying the spread of Sanskrit across South Asia, Sheldon Pollock speaks of the 'Sanskrit Cosmopolis'. He finds a parallel between the emergence of modern European languages in the wake of the Renaissance and the flourishing of modern Indian languages in the second millennium. This process of 'vernacularisation' is a phenomenon which needs to be studied in a comparative context to understand the nature of 'modernity' that has reshaped our worlds in the past five hundred years. Pollock's limiting idea of 'vernacularisation' seen through a Euro-centric lens needs to be unpacked to render it productive from a South Asian point of view. The role of Bhakti, Sant and Sufi movements in the formation of modern South Asian languages can only be fully understood only when it is seen from a broad comparative context.

South Asia has contributed four major religious philosophies to the world namely Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. The cosmopolitan, universal vision embodied in the teachings of these religions impart a unique philosophical depth to the literary and artistic traditions of South Asia. These religions have also assimilated the best teachings of other religions from the rest of the world. One should remember that both Christianity and Islam have had a strong presence across South Asia for centuries. They have greatly influenced the course

of our cultural history, shaping new forms of expression and modes of thought. 'Sufism' has influenced poetry and music in many regions of South Asia. It is important to 'recognize' South Asia as a 'world of thought' with its own unique vocabulary of experience and expression as demonstrated by its intertextual relations between story-telling, poetry, painting, dance and sculpture. The sense of the sacred that informs many of its literary traditions does not preclude the secular in a modern sense. Hence there is much to be debated in the transactions between religion as practice, lived reality and moral philosophy.

South Asia enters the world at large as a political and cultural phenomenon also through its diaspora. The languages of South Asia have travelled beyond its borders, creating creolized cultures and diasporic communities all over the world. South Asian academics in the premier institutions of the West have contributed to critical and literary theory in a substantial manner in the last half century. Disciplines like postcolonial studies, translation studies and film studies would be unthinkable without their participation. If "all literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin, either in translation or in the original" can be seen as "world literature" (David Demrosch ), South Asian literature has been 'world literature' from its very inception. The manner of circulation of Jataka tales, *Manimekhalai*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and many more similar works merits serious discussion.

We would like the delegates to take up issues of recognition, reception and resistance in particular. What are the factors that prevent the recognition of South Asian literatures and their significance in contemporary world? Questions of major and minor languages are relevant, but the politics of globalization and the prevalence of Euro-centric narratives that constitute 'world literature' are equally responsible. While considering the reception of South Asian literature

in the rest of the world, it is also relevant to study how European, American, African and Latin American Literatures have been received in South Asia. There are questions of selective appropriation and exclusivist positions that need to be explored here. Let us also admit that we have not always lived upto our great claims of “VasudhaivaKutumbakam”. There has been resistance in the reception of ideas, as ‘national’/ ‘regional’ cultures turn ‘parochial’ out of their anxiety of authenticity. “Resistance” can also be taken to mean the tradition of resistance that extends from Therigatha in the pre-Christian era to modern Dalit poetry, constituting a continuous tradition of dissent and interrogation.

It is obvious that there are many topics and issues to discuss. The following are some of the sub-themes that may be addressed in your abstracts:

1. Pluralism, polyphony and heteroglossia in South Asian Culture
2. Transcultural/ Transnational in South Asian Writing
3. The Major, the minor and the marginal in South Asian Writing
4. Historicising ‘Vernacularisation’ from South Asian perspectives
5. Literary Historiography in South Asia
6. Religious and Secular Imaginaries in South Asian Literature
7. Popular vs Elite in the literary culture of South Asia
8. Translation and Intertextuality across South Asian cultures
9. Literature of the South Asian Diaspora
10. South Asian theatre and films: Innovations and achievements

Abstracts may be sent to Prof. Chandra Mohan and Prof. E.V.Ramakrishnan who are conveners of the Research Group at the following email addresses: -

[c.mohan.7@hotmail.com](mailto:c.mohan.7@hotmail.com) and [evrama51@gmail.com](mailto:evrama51@gmail.com)

## **International Comparative Literature Association World Congress**

Macau 2019

Panel proposal accepted for Group 4. *The Multiple Histories of Comparative Literature*

Panel Coordinator: Professor Kunal Chattopadhyay

Professor of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, India

Text of Proposal as uploaded in ICLA Website

The Progressive Movement in India and its Successors

The Progressive Writers Association came up in 1936. Though seen as a communist front because of the leading role of figures like Sajjad Zaheer, in fact it was much more broad based. The Ranadive line of the Communist Party in 1948, with its sectarianism and the attempt in the cultural field to control the artistes, resulted in a narrowing of the base. Nonetheless, the PWA and its heirs remained significant forces in large parts of India across several decades. This panel will continue an examination of the all-India character of the movement initiated in ICLA 2016. In the present panel, we will be addressing the development of the movement over time, looking at plurality of reception of socialist or progressive cultural politics in the different Indian languages, in the way class struggle, anti-colonialism, caste exploitation and gender oppression were woven together, in novels, stories, drama, poetry and critical theory. At the same time, it will be necessary to explore how the idea of progressive literature was received in different languages and how it played out over time, between the 1930s and the 1970s or beyond. Looking at Urdu-Hindi, Bangla, Malayalam, and Tamil literature (and if possible others) in both synchronic and diachronic frames from the 1930s Progressive Movement to the era of mass communist oppositions in independent India, the group will seek to examine the ways in which the progressive movement was able to respond to Indian realities.

Papers will seek to address the way the progressive movement differentiated across languages, as well as the different types of impact it had in different modes and genres – poetry, theatre, film, novel and short story, as well as the cross fertilization across languages and genres.

**Additional Remarks in explanation for those considering becoming part of this panel:**

While there has been a fair amount of work on the Progressive Movement, this has mostly been done separately for different languages, with the inevitable claim that one's chosen language was the truly important one. This can be seen both for work on Urdu and on Bangla, for example. The aim of this panel is to bring together different languages and the work of progressive writers. In addition, this aims to look at the relationship of the Progressive movement of the period 1936-1952, and the later radical or progressive writers (or the further development of the older progressive writers). Thus, it would be valuable to look at how the Naxalbari movement and the influence of the Cultural Revolution in China impacted different groups. It would also be important to trace the variations in the treatment of not just class, but gender and caste across different areas and languages. Papers looking at literature and other fields, like theatre, cinema, etc, will also be welcome. Finally, as Comparatists, we need to look at the way Marxist literary theories such as socialist realism were accepted differentially in the different languages in connection with the distinct cultures and political realities.