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## IACLALS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### Call for Papers

Co-hosted by the Department of English, Pondicherry University  
February 6-8, 2019

#### Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth

When Sri Aurobindo claimed that "knowledge" was the "reasoned acceptance of false appearances," he was indicating an awareness of how truth is mediated by the contingencies of everyday life. The term "Post-Truth" has been recently coined to express the false appearances under which we, as citizens of a new age of global flows of peoples and capital, explore our world. Initially a term that helped lessen the embarrassment of global hegemonies of the First World, "post-truth" has increasingly been understood as a "condition" if not an aesthetic or even a new epistemology. In this brave new world, aesthetics and politics aspire to become the handmaiden of the market.

However, while the coinage is new, the condition has achieved a patina of its own. Digitally mediated realities, regimes of flexible accumulation, long-range international public policies, rapid balkanization, the increasing suppression of free speech, the rise of new democratic autocracies, and various forms of politically hybrid sub-cultures (such as Wikileaks and tabloidization) have become the dominant forms of aesthetico-politics of this new age. Our conference theme "Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth" seeks to understand the cultural expressions of this new and anxious age. Such a condition is similar but not identical to that known as the post-modern where the multiplicity of texts and the mingling of high and low culture allow us to question the differences between factuality and fictionality, and bring out hidden relationships between knowledge and power. Of particular interest in this new age then is the post-modern condition of the proliferation of textualities, their constructed nature, their claims to truth, and their status as verifiable cultural utterances.

In this post-truth age, literary texts, graphic texts, oral narratives, advertising copy, journalistic texts, tourist texts—all partake of this duality almost as if this were part of a new cultural DNA. Perhaps, the new "epistemology" has made us more aware of the vulnerable nature of truth, for the circulation of any belief system and its establishment as "truth" is a legacy, for many, of nineteenth-century colonialism. Any sustained meditation on post-truth must also wonder if this new age is not carrying the epistemological burdens of the past even as it wears the Emperor's new technological clothes.

Our conference aims to interrogate the following:

- Post-truth as a new aesthetic and/or a new politics of culture
- Understanding post-truth phenomenon as defining the artistic and the mundane
- The constitution of cultural production with respect to the notion of post-truth
- Post-truth and history
- The relation of post-truth with propaganda
- Humanities and literature as a space for reflection and resistance

Proposals for papers may explore the above areas or any others that pertain to the theme of the conference. Papers may deal with literature as well as intersections of literature, media, and performance.

The conference is open only to members of IACLALS (visit [www.iaclals.com](http://www.iaclals.com) to know how to become a member).

- Abstracts (250 words) with a short bio (max 70 words) to be sent to [iaclalsconferences@gmail.com](mailto:iaclalsconferences@gmail.com) by November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
- Acceptance will be intimated by November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- If you wish to be considered for the CD Narasimhaiah Prize for the Best Paper presented at the conference, please submit complete papers by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Others must submit complete papers by December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please note that you will have twenty minutes to read your papers.

- Registration to be completed by January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (details will be sent with acceptances)

IACLALS also announces the next edition of the Meenakshi Mukherjee Prize for the Best Paper published in the previous block of two years (2017-18) by a member of the IACLALS. Please submit your published paper with all details to [iaclalsconferences@gmail.com](mailto:iaclalsconferences@gmail.com) by October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018. You must have been a member of IACLALS when you published the paper. Past winners of the Meenakshi Mukherjee Prize can submit entries for the prize only after the completion of three years from the year they received the award. Papers submitted for the award earlier cannot be submitted again.

#### About our hosts:

The Department of English, one of the oldest Departments of the University, was established on 1st December, 1986, and since inception the Department has been the hub of teaching and research activity, attracting a cross-section of students and research scholars from all over the country. It has established itself as a stronghold of Comparative Literature, teaching Comparative Literary Theory and fostering Comparative Literary studies between Indian Languages and English... Please visit <http://www.pondiuni.edu.in/department/department-english> for details.

The Organizing Secretary is: **Dr. H. Kalpana, Professor** and coordinators are Dr. K. Reshmi, Associate Professor and Dr. Lakhimaili Mili, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Pondicherry University (PU), Puducherry 605014.

HOD: **Dr. Clement S. Lourdes, Professor, DOE, PU**

#### Members of the host committee:

- Dr. Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, Professor
- Dr. T. Marx, Professor
- Dr. Binu Zachariah, Associate Professor
- Dr. Ujjwal Jana, Associate Professor
- Dr. S. Visaka Devi, Assistant Professor

#### About IACLALS:

It is the officially recognized Indian chapter of the international ACLALS (Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies), started in India in 1974. Professor C.D. Narasimhaiah was the founding Chairperson. He was succeeded by Professor Meenakshi Mukherjee, who in turn was succeeded as Chairperson by Professor Harish Trivedi. The current Chairperson is Professor GJV Prasad.

While the international ACLALS holds conferences once in three years, IACLALS holds an annual conference. It publishes a journal, and also e-newsletters. IACLALS also holds smaller more focused seminars periodically. IACLALS encourages the study of literatures in-various various Indian languages as well as the study of media and performance.