

ICLA RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON RELIGION, ETHICS, AND LITERATURE
REPORT (2014-15)

Quick Synopsis of Committee Activities:

1. Initial meeting at ICLA Paris, 2013. Members proposed holding an exploratory conference around the committee topic to determine range of interests.
2. Inaugural conference, June 2014. Kitty Millet elected to serve as chairperson at the business meeting.
3. Committee approved at the Beijing meeting, September 2014.
4. Proposal requesting embedded panels at CLAI, October 2014.
5. Book proposal sent to Bloomsbury, December 2014.
6. CLAI panels, March 2015.
7. Panels submitted to ICLA Congress, April-May 2015.
8. Book proposal accepted at Bloomsbury, May 2015.

Members of the Research Committee:

1. Dorothy Figueira, Distinguished Research Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Georgia
2. Steven Shankman, Unesco Chair of Transcultural Studies and Distinguished Professor of Classics and English, University of Oregon
3. John Burt Foster, University Professor of General and World Literature, George Mason University
4. Ipshita Chanda, Professor of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University; and ICCR Professor of Indian Culture, Georgetown University
5. Stephanie Heimgartner, Lecturer, Comparative Literature, Ruhr-Universität Bochum
6. Gerald Gillespie, Professor of German and Comparative Literature, Stanford University
7. Wlad Godzich, Distinguished Professor of Literature, UCSC
8. Anita Bhela, Associate Professor of English, University of Delhi
9. Axel Stähler, Reader in Comparative Literature, Director of Learning and Teaching School of European Culture and Languages (SECL), University of Kent, Canterbury
10. Ellen Peel, Professor of Comparative Literature and English, SFSU
11. Hope Hodgkins, Lecturer, English, University of North Carolina
12. Kitty Millet, Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Comparative Literature, SF State University
13. Katie Lally, Doctoral Student in Literature, UCSC
14. Stephen Sondrup, Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Utah
15. Monika Schmitz-Evans, Professor of Comparative Literature, Universität Bochum
16. Shawna Vesco, doctoral student in Literature, UCSC
17. Monika Schipper, Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies (ret.), Leiden University
18. Shirin Khanomahamadi, Associate Professor of Comparative and World Literature, SFSU
19. Elizabeth Marie Lovlie, Adjunct Lecturer of Literature, University of Oslo, Norway.
20. Vered Weiss, Assistant Lecturer in Comparative Literature, European School of Languages and Literatures, University of Kent

21. Dane Johnson, Professor of Comparative and World Literature, SFSU
22. Munazza Yaqoob, Assistant Professor and Chairperson of English, International Islamic University, Female Campus, Islamabad, Pakistan
23. Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, George and Harriet Cornell Endowed Professor of Religion, Dir. Jewish Studies Program, Co-Dir. Center for India and South Asia, Rollins College
24. Sieghild Bogumil, Lecturer, Comparative Literature, Ruhr-Universität Bochum
25. Brian Britt, Professor and Chair of Religion and Culture, Virginia Tech University
26. Julian Levinson, Associate Professor of English and Jewish Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Projected Conference Scheme (2014, San Francisco; 2015, Jaipur, India; 2016, Vienna Congress).

- I. Presentation of papers at the research committee's inaugural conference, "Fault Lines of Modernity: New Contexts for Religion, Ethics. And Modernity. San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA. June 2-4, 2014. With over 32 papers presented, the committee's inaugural conference served to refine the purpose of and to illustrate the need for such a committee. The highlights of the conference included several position papers addressing how scholars might think about religion, ethics, and literature as necessarily involved with each other, rather than three discrete disciplines, isolated from each other.
- II. Presentations of papers on panels at CLAI conference in Jaipur, India. March 1-4, 2015. Themes for these two panels derive primarily from the ICLA's Executive Committee's recommendations for development after the committee's initial approval last September.
 - A. Panel 1/ The Enchantment of 'Beings': Literary Ontologies and Indian Aesthetics
 - i. Steven Shankman, "Beyond Destiny, Beyond Dharma: Ethical Interruptions of Ancient Narrative and the End of the Mahabharata."
 - ii. Anita Bhela, "Literature, New Media and the Secularization of Religion"
 - iii. S. Satish Kumar, "'What Islam are you talking about?'—the Forgetting of Religion: Literary Studies"
 - iv. Kitty Millet, "Obligated to Beings, Imagining Repair as an Ethical Duty" (paper will be read by proxy).
 - B. Panel 2/ Meridian and/or 'Fault': Ancient and Modern SE Asian Literatures in Comparative Perspective
 - i. Dorothy Figueira, "Is anjuman me apko ana hai bar bar: the Ethics of Samsara in German Poetry"
 - ii. E.V. Ramakrishnan, "From repression to emancipation: religion, caste, and community in the Malayam Dalit novels of the nineteenth-century."
 - iii. Peter Hadju, "Religion and National Ethics in some pre-WWI Central-European Historical Novels"

- iv. Sieghild Bogumil, "Here the Tragic, Over There Happiness?"
- C. Proposed Panel Streams for ICLA Congress, Vienna 2016
 - i. The Ineffability of Language and Mystical Utterance, chaired by Dorothy Figueira and Kitty Millet
 - ii. Interpretation of (Secular) Literary Texts and the Exegesis of Sacred Texts, chaired by Steven Shankman
 - iii. The Text as Being: Redemption and Regret, chaired by Kitty Millet
- III. Members' contribution in the form of lectures/addresses relating to the theme of the project:
 - A. Kitty Millet, "Missing Kaddish and Literary Ontologies," at "the Ethics of Storytelling," University of Turku, Turku, Finland, June 4-6, 2015. The conference was sponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature, University of Turku. Professor Millet gave a shortened version of her forthcoming essay from the *Fault Lines* volume.
 - B. Kitty Millet, "The Ethics of Literature in H.G. Adler." Special lecture for Comparative Literature Graduate Students' seminar. A reprise of her recent publication on Adler, Professor Millet discussed how the research committee's focus related to the publication.
- IV. Recent publications relating to the Project:
 - A. Figueira, Dorothy. *Hermeneutics of Suspicion*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- V. Forthcoming publications relating to the project:
 - A. Millet, Kitty and Dorothy Figueira. Eds. *Fault Lines of Modernity. The Fractures and Repairs of Religion, Ethics, and Literature*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2017. This represents the inaugural collection of the committee's research.

Kitty Millet, Chairperson
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