**REPORT**

**​IACLALS Annual Conference 2019**
**February 6 – 8, 2019**
**Pondicherry University**
**"Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth"**

The IACLALS Annual Conference 2019 "Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth" held from the 6th to the 8th of February at the University of Pondicherry, was efficiently and warmly steered by Professor Kalpana and her team. For a large contingent of us, traveling from an unusually freezing February in the North, Puducherry's balmy, sea side beauty was just the perfect conference getaway. And yet the three conferencing days were anything but quiet retreats. Powerful papers in packed halls jostled with post truth's many hydra heads.

The keynote address by eminent writer and public intellectual G.N. Devy, had a ruminative precision, as he spoke of the current political climate and the urgency of the times and the need to desequester literature, teaching and all academic liaising from their ivory tower luxuries. Stephanos Stephanides, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Cyprus, also author, poet, translator, critic, ethnographer, and documentary film maker, read from his poems on the final day and also delivered the Valedictory address. Summing up the deliberations of the conference he spoke of Post-truth’s theoretical confrontations and impasses.

The Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial Prize 2019, went to Avishek Parui, IIT Madras for his article, "What’s the use of stories that aren’t even true?” Agency, Fabulation and the Epistemology of the Storytelling Self in Salman Rushdie’s Haroun and the Sea of Stories" published in South Asian Review. The jury this year had Prof M. Sridhar, Prof Geetha Ganapathy-Doré, and Prof Angelie Multani who judged the entries.

The CDN Prize finalists this year were, Ritwick Bhattacharya, Sania Hashmi, Srishti Gupta and Srinjoyee Dutta. The entries in the first round, prior to the Conference were marked by our judges, Prof Jatin Nayak and Prof Srilata Krishnan, and in the final round read at the CDN Panel, the jury comprised Dr. H.. Kalpana, Prof Stephanos Stephanides and Prof Asaduddin. The winner in a closely fought contest was, Srinjoyee Dutta for her paper, "Fractious Truths and Factious Genres: Reading Haruki Murakami’s Kafka on the Shore in the Post-Truth Age".

Angelie Multani, Debaditya Bhattacharya and Arjun Ghosh had new books published this year and they were in conversation with GJV Prasad, Rina Ramdev and Subhendu Mund.

Our conference hosts organised evening trips to the Aurobindo Ashram and a post-conference trip to Chidambaram.

And then of course there is that very important conference marker - food, which we are happy to report was judged a winner all the way! At every lunch our Conference Director, Kalpana was there with her solicitous hospitality checking on everyone with that particular warmth which was appreciated by all.

At the Conference this year, IACLALS also released a statement condemning the stifling of political dissent, in light of the charges against Hiren Gohain, Anand Teltumbde, the JNU students and others.

Our thanks once again to all our members who joined us this year and our deep gratitude to Professor Kalpana for a memorable conference.

Dr Rina Ramdev
Secretary
IACLALS