

Call for Papers

The Ninth Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism

The Ethico-Political Turn in Literary Studies: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives

Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

November 8-10, 2019

The ethico-political turn in Western Literary Studies during the 1990s is usually associated with the rise of the ethical philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, which, in its turn, had acquired a broader acknowledgment through the reconfiguration of deconstruction's agenda in U.S.-American universities during 1980s. Investigating the various ethico-political consequences of its early tenets at that time, deconstruction opened itself up towards its philosophical tradition (Gasché), psychoanalysis (Lacan, Badiou), feminist and queer theory (B. Johnson, Butler), postcolonial theory (Spivak, Bhabha), law studies (Fish, Cornell), historiography (LaCapra), trauma studies (Bauman, Felman, Caruth), etc. Without Derrida's confrontations with Levinas's ethics, such transdisciplinary developments would be hardly imaginable. Derrida opposed Levinas's tendency to save the ethically divine "face of the Other" from any contamination by human political investments, insisting instead on the political indebtedness of all ethical agendas, with the (possible) exception of literature. His discrete ethical authorization of literature was, independently but roughly simultaneously, paralleled by Lacan's "literary" withdrawal of analyst's self or Foucault's "literary" self-othering. Through such developments, gradually, literature became the ethical ferment within the cross-disciplinary field of humanities.

The ethical turn in Chinese literary studies occurred two decades later, ascending against a different background. Since opening up to the outside world after the Cultural Revolution, China has imported a huge number of Western critical theories, which have substantially reshaped the traditional profile of literary studies in the country. However, since these theories were primarily concerned with either literary structures and forms (e.g., New Criticism, Russian Formalism, Structuralism, etc.) or politics, power and

ideology in literature (e.g., feminism, post-colonialism, Marxism, etc.), some Chinese literary scholars noticed a lack of ethical engagement in them. From their point of view, Western theories neglected or devalued literature's moral aspect. Chinese Ethical Literary Criticism, introduced by Professor Nie Zhenzhao, has taken up the task of eliminating this deficiency. Its recent boom in China induced the establishment of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism (IAELC), which has provided a forum and resource for academics and advanced students from all over the world to share their findings in the field of literature and ethics. So far, IAELC has held eight international conferences in collaboration with some renowned global universities, such as Queen Mary University of London, UK, and Kyushu University, Japan.

With the aim of opening up international dialogue on the aforementioned developments in Western and Eastern literary studies and humanities, Zhejiang University will host the Ninth Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism, titled "The Ethico-Political Turn in Literary Studies: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives" in collaboration with Academia Europaea from November 8 to 10, 2019. We anticipate and welcome contributions on the following topics and issues:

1. Ethical Literary Criticism, comparative literature, and cross-cultural studies,
2. Ethical Literary Criticism and the re-reading of literary canons,
3. Ethical Literary Criticism and interdisciplinarity,
4. The reaffirmation of Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno's sublime concepts of literature,
5. The association of literature with sacrificed voices in the works of Giorgio Agamben, Gilles Deleuze, and Jacques Rancière,
6. Memory vs. history, involuntary vs. voluntary memory: On the breakthrough of memory studies,
7. The reaffirmation of the sub-human, the creaturely, the disfigured, and the animal in body studies and animal studies,
8. The ethical rewriting of the political relationship between:
 - a) Theory and literature in deconstruction, psychoanalysis, postcolonial theory etc.
 - b) Literature and law in the philosophy of law,
 - c) Politics and "the police" (Rancière) in the political philosophy,
 - d) Past and present in historiography,
 - e) Center and periphery in postcolonial and post-imperial studies, and

f) Perpetrators and victims in trauma studies.

Conference languages: English and Chinese

Abstract submissions:

Please send an abstract of up to 300 words plus the feedback form as an email attachment to iaelc2019@163.com **before April 15, 2019.**

An official invitation will be sent by e-mail (in PDF form) or by mail on request (in printed form) once your abstract has passed the peer review. You will learn whether this has happened by May 30, 2019.

Registration:

The online registration runs until May 1, 2019. For further information on registration, please check the conference website, which will be launched by the team from Zhejiang University on March 10, 2019.

It is possible to get an early-bird discount by registering before June 15, 2019. The early-bird fee is **\$150**. After that date, the registration fee will be **\$200**, covering the conference materials, coffee/tea breaks, and a farewell dinner.

Accommodation:

Participants can book their accommodation following the recommendation of Zhejiang University or on their own preference.

Venue: Zijingang Campus, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

The International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism (IAELC)
Zhejiang University, China
Academia Europaea