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## *A letter from ACLA President Karyn Ball*

As the president of the American Comparative Literature Association for 2025-2026, I greet you from an area of the world where it is customary to acknowledge the lands of the Indigenous people who were and continue to be dispossessed by the white hordes that came uninvited to North America from Europe. On the University of Alberta website, you will find an official acknowledgment of our co-optation of “lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7, and 8,” and that once belonged to “the Néhíyaw (Cree), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, Nakoda (Stoney), Dene, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and Anishinaabe (Ojibway/Saulteaux).” Not mentioned, of course, is the assimilationist Indian Act of 1876, which underwrote the infamous residential school policy. Between 1880 and 1996, at least 150,000 Indigenous children were ripped away from their families and interned in church-administered “schools” that functioned more like prisons. Christian and Catholic clergy not only punished the children in their care for speaking Native languages but also humiliated, starved, and sexually abused these young wards — all in the name of eradicating the “Indian” within.

Those of you familiar with my trajectory might recall that I am preoccupied in my teaching and writing with memory politics and “difficult knowledge” — the kind of knowledge that does not flatter those who most urgently need to confront it. I watch the events of our moment with the sad realization that there will be those in the future who, like now, will continue to avoid their implication in brutal national policies with painful intergenerational legacies.

president traditionally greets members, I will spare you a list of the mind warping cruelties we are currently witnessing in the United States and elsewhere. Instead, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm a comparative literature praxis that encourages respect for the sociocultural and historical boundaries that translation and intellectual inquiry cross at a moment when international boundary crossings are increasingly treacherous for more and more people.

As the executive committee and I look forward to our next in-person convention in Montréal, we remain mindful of the differential vulnerabilities of our membership in and beyond North America while we necessarily act out fantasies of continuity in the face of mounting attacks on universities, intellectual labor, and free speech at the intersection of government-sponsored terrorism in the United States and ongoing genocide abroad. Indeed, profound uncertainty about the future of academic conventions and non-profit professional organizations such as ours in a politically hostile environment already haunted the executive committee's decisions about how to facilitate the 2025 convention. What kind of moral and structural minefield will we find ourselves in February 2026? Without attempting to answer this unanswerable question, I invite you to embrace the longing for continuity that sometimes feels like disavowal yet also spurs us to act as if our rituals and inspirations will somehow survive a siege of known and unknown assaults at the same time as we remain open to the possibilities that catastrophe leaves in its wake but only if hope abides.

**Karyn Ball**

ACLA President 2025-2026

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## *Looking Forward: ACLA's 2026 Annual Meeting*

We're excited to announce that we will be returning to the [Palais de congrès de Montréal](#) for our 2026 Annual Meeting! The meeting

[portal](#) is open now—we'll accept proposals through August 8. If you'd like to brush up on our seminar and paper proposal process, please visit the [resources on our website](#). In the coming weeks, we will share more information on the call for papers, registration, and other information. We look forward to seeing you in Montreal!

If you attended the 2025 Annual Meeting and have a few moments to spare, please [complete our post-conference survey](#). We use the survey results to prepare new programming and choose conference venues—your opinion matters!

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## Welcome to the new members of the ACLA Board:

Second Vice President: **Huda Fakhreddine**

Finance Committee Chair: **Eyal Amiran**

Nominations Committee Chair: **Anthony Alessandrini**

Graduate Student Representative: **Haider Shahbaz**

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## *Congratulations to the winners of the 2024-2025 prizes!*

### Aldridge Prize:

**Winner:** Haider Shahbaz, *Translating Towards A Dark Commons: Toni Morrison's Beloved in Urdu*

### Bernheimer Prize:

**Winner:** Denis Topalovič, *Untimely Forms: Late Modernism, War, Essayistic Form*

**Winner:** Grega Ulen, *Nonaligned Comparisons: Peripheral Realisms and the Utopian Imagination*

### Frenz Prize:

**Winner:** Abigail Culpepper, *Exorbitant Critique: Deconstruction as Environmental*

**Honorable Mention:** Auriane Benabou, *A Frozen Fear: Re-examining Plague*

*Literature in an Artic Context*

**Honorable Mention:** Francisco Tijerina, *(Counter)archiving Minerals: From Fear to*

*Hope in Contemporary Mexican Fictions*

### Presidential Undergraduate Prize:

**Winner:** Bobby Yalam, *Tangier, in and against the Nation-State: Postcolonial*

*Bureaucracy in Recent Tangérois Fiction*

### Wellek Prize, Monograph:

**Winner:** Aria Fani, *Reading across Borders: Afghans, Iranians, and Literary*

*Nationalism*

**Honorable Mention:** Amr Kamal, *Emporialism: Department Store Fictions and the*

*Politics of the Mediterranean*

### Wellek Prize, Edited Collection:

**Winner:** Ulka Anjaria & Anjali Nerlekar, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Indian*

*Literatures*

**Honorable Mention:** Isabel C. Gómez & Marlene Hansen Esplin, *Translating Home in*

*the Global South: Migration, Belonging, and Language Justice*

### Levin Prize:

**Winner:** Annette Lienau, *Sacred Language, Vernacular Difference: Global Arabic and*

*Counter-Imperial Literatures*

**Honorable Mention:** Alexandra Reza, *Anticolonial Form: Literary Journals at the End*

*of Empire*

### Tartar Subvention:

**Winner:** Alexander Fyfe, *Literary Decoloniality: Modern African Writing and the*

*Politics of Subjectivity*

**Winner:** Patrick Noonan, *Age of Disaffection: The Aesthetic Critique of Politics in 1960s*

*Japan*

**Winner:** Ragini Tharoor Srinivasan, *Overdetermined: How Indian English Literature*

*Becomes Ethnic, Postcolonial, and Anglophone*

**If you heard an outstanding presentation by a graduate student**

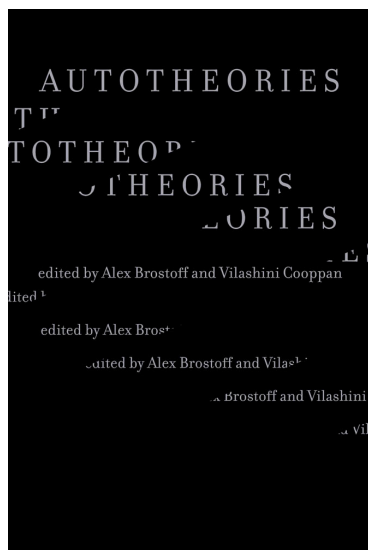
the Horst Frenz Prize, awarded to the best paper presented by a graduate student at the annual meeting of the ACLA. You'll find [additional details and the nomination form on our website](#). If you're unsure of a name or paper title, please check the [online schedule](#) or [program PDF](#).

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## Recent Publications

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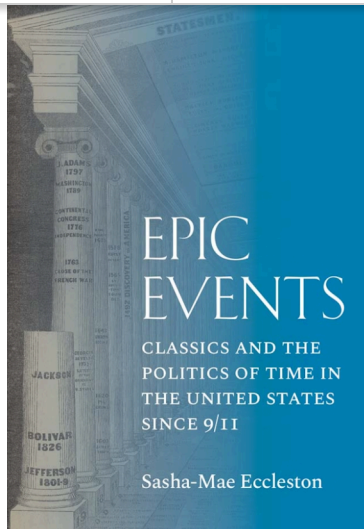
We are excited to announce the following recent publications by members of the American Comparative Literature Association! If you have published a book in the past year and want to be featured in an upcoming ACLA newsletter, please send a brief description & cover photo to [info@acla.org](mailto:info@acla.org).



"Autotheories" edited by Alex Brostoff and Vilashini Cooppan

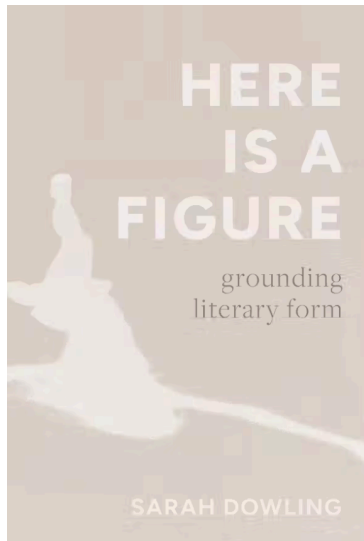
*Autotheories* tells the story of a field in formation. Building on traditions that have long fused life writing, philosophical encounter, embodied theorizing, and cultural critique, autotheory constructs new practices of critical theory. Transgressing generic boundaries and bridging stylistic registers, it crafts language that is intimate, analytic, playful, and insurgent. Editors Alex Brostoff and Vilashini Cooppan underscore autotheory's multiple genealogies and genre-bending forms while situating it within the contemporary political field. In this collection, autotheory emerges as a strut (of style), a straddle (of disciplines), a proliferation (of selves), an axis (of identifications), an index (of attachments), and an archive (of loves).

An assemblage and an experience, *Autotheories* surveys the field's iterations and permutations. Without settling for classification or bowing to ossification, *Autotheories* invites you to its discursive play.



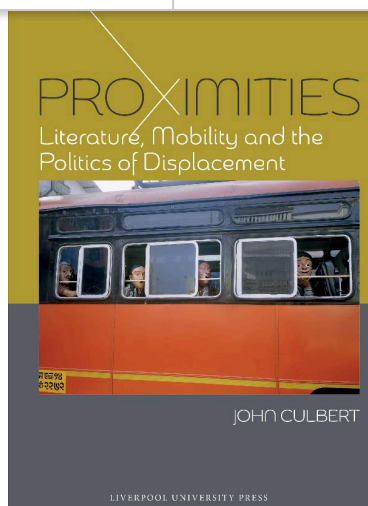
United States since 9/11" by Sasha-Mae Eccleston

The Ancient Greeks and Romans have been privileged as authoritatively timeless throughout American history. American leaders and pundits capitalize on this privilege when, during periods of crisis, they allude to these cultures to offer relief, to reestablish trust in the status quo, and to promote national unity. Analyzing texts that also draw on ancient Greek and Roman material to respond to these crises and conflicts, *Epic Events* explains how contemporary authors and artists have questioned calls for unity that homogenize disparate experiences of time and thereby ignore systemic inequality. Their engagements with the temporalities of the ancient material reveal how time structures membership in the national community and the exercise of citizenship.

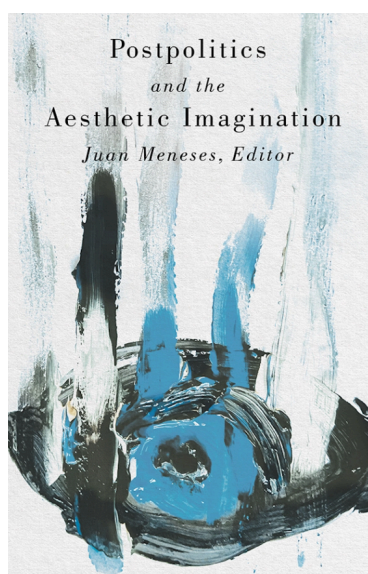


"Here Is a Figure: Grounding Literary Form" by Sarah Dowling

A study of supine, prone, and recumbent figures in contemporary literature. The prostitute, the protester, the murder victim, the invalid, the layabout, the depressive: all are associated with lying down. Skewing and flattening the perpendicular axis that defines the human in Western philosophy, art, and humanist inquiry, these downward-directed figures' refusals or failures to hew to the moral and postural logics of uprightness enable a reassessment of subjectivity, ecological relation, and representation—that last of which is, after all, a process of standing-in-for. *Here Is a Figure: Grounding Literary Form* works across an array of well-known and counter-canonical texts, showing that recumbent figures saturate the literary arts of the present and respond to the proliferation of contemporary forms of grounding, in all its meanings. Reading these figures in dialogue with critical Indigenous studies, disability studies, and horizontalist feminisms, Sarah Dowling reveals the potential in thinking with and through a position stretched out across, dependent on, and undetachable from the earth.



As the era of high globalization has given way to a time of resurgent nationalisms, the discourse of travel has undergone significant change. The previous era's keywords of freedom, mobility, and connection increasingly vie with a language of borders, security, and national identity. In this study of the politics of modern travel and migration, John Culbert shows how today's contradictions of global mobility are an abiding feature of modernity and an outgrowth of coloniality as an ongoing practice of land theft, displacement, and dispossession.



"Postpolitics and the Aesthetic Imagination" edited by Juan Meneses

*Postpolitics and the Aesthetic Imagination* investigates how an aesthetic theory of postpolitics helps us understand and counteract the most insidious processes of depoliticization. With a survey of various artistic mediums—film, dance, music, literature, and digital media—the essays explore how the aesthetic imagination can play a crucial role in reenvisioning key political elements, including governance, agency, rights, and responsibility, revealing ways to breathe new life into the work of emancipatory politics. Reclaiming the arts and humanities as vital to political life, the contributors revisit but also move beyond the social sciences' central focus on neoliberalism and public administration to address other topics such as tech-capitalism, race, environmental violence, and patriarchy.

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## Calls for Papers

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July 30).

- [Call for papers](#) for *Nesir: Journal of Literary Studies* issue "Mimesis in Philosophy and Literature: Representation, Truth, and Meaning" (due August 1).
- [Call for papers](#) for *Humanities Bulletin* special issue "Reading to Know, Learning to Hear, Engaging in Respect and Love within an Intercultural Frame" (due September 20).

To post a call for papers to the [ACLA website](#), email [info@acla.org](mailto:info@acla.org) with the deadline and your CFP in PDF format or as a link.

## Job Announcements

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- [Fall Quarter Literature Lecturer](#), UC San Diego, apply by July 25.
- [CLIC Grant Writing Residencies 2025](#), apply by July 31.
- [Audrey and John Leslie Endowed Chair in North American Indian Literary Studies](#), Michigan State University, apply by October 6.
- [English Education Coordinator/Associate Professor](#), Michigan State University, apply by December 11.
- [Assistant Professor in Indigenous Studies](#), New York University, application review ongoing.
- [Assistant Professor of Classics](#), University of Washington, application review ongoing.
- [Assistant Professor in Chicago/a/x/Latino/a/x Studies](#), University of Washington, application review ongoing.

To post a job announcement to the [ACLA website](#), email [info@acla.org](mailto:info@acla.org) with the deadline, application link, and any additional information.

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today!

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