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University Presses receive collaborative grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support Modern Language Initiative

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Fordham University Press, University of California Press (*FlashPoints* series), **University of Pennsylvania Press, University of Virginia Press, and University of Washington Press** have been awarded a collaborative publishing grant of \$1.16 million from the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** to publish scholarly books on the literatures of the non-Anglophone world. The **Modern Language Initiative (MLI)** will support the publication of 20 titles by each press over the next five years.

“Inasmuch as academic presses are the lifeblood of scholarly discourse, this grant is a wonderful assurance that non-Anglophone literatures will receive the attention they are due,” said **Stephen Freedman**, Ph.D., senior vice president / chief academic officer and professor of natural science at Fordham University. “The grant is a wise investment in global scholarship, and comes at a time when scholars in the United States are increasingly finding their research subjects abroad.”

The grant will assist the presses in identifying, publishing, and disseminating first books by scholars in fields such as rhetoric, film, performing arts, and popular culture, as well as language and literature. The focus of this initiative is on language itself, especially as manifested in literature and other cultural narratives, rather than on areas of geographic or national origin.

Despite increasing public interest in world literature and growing enrollment in foreign language classes nationwide, publishing opportunities for scholars in these fields have declined. This generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will allow each of the five presses to publish up to four titles per year for the next five years.

This collaborative endeavor will offer authors a shared space for publishing innovative scholarship that will influence the way literature and other language-based arts are researched and taught. Each press will maintain its own separate editorial profile and acquisitions procedures, while centralizing copyediting, production, and an aggressive marketing program. The grant will be administered by Fordham University Press, which organized the cooperative effort and presented the proposal to the Foundation.

“There are fewer and fewer opportunities for scholars to find publishing outlets in the United States for work on non-English texts. With the support of the Modern Language Initiative, authors will have new opportunities to publish in this growing and vital field,” says **Rosemary G. Feal**, Executive Director of the Modern Language Association.

“We applaud the Mellon Foundation for its vision in funding this consortium of academic presses,” said **Joseph M. McShane**, S.J., president of Fordham University. “It is an acknowledgment of the primacy of intellectual community, and of the need for a diversity of voices in scholarly conversation. We look forward to the broadening effect such diversity will bring to Fordham and its sister institutions.”

For more information, please see www.washington.edu/uwpress.

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