



Retrospective Modernism

The Third Annual International Conference of the Modernist Studies in Asia Network (MSIA)

14-16 May 2020

Fudan University, Shanghai

Keynote Speakers

Rebecca Walkowitz (Rutgers University)

Simon During (University of Melbourne)

Matthew Hart (Columbia University)

Call for Papers

Modernism is often characterized by an acute sense of a break between the past and the present. “We are sharply cut off from our predecessors. A shift in the scale,” remarked Virginia Woolf, “has shaken the fabric from top to bottom, alienated us from the past and made us perhaps too vividly conscious of the present.” The aesthetic and political projects of modernism, however, remain inextricable from engagement with literary and intellectual traditions in various parts of the world. Ezra Pound’s phrase “make it new,” one of the most famous slogans associated with modernism, derives from renderings of Confucian thought and teachings. James Joyce’s reinvention of the *Odyssey* in *Ulysses* embodies much more than parodies and ironic gestures. And while T. S. Eliot advocated “the historical sense” that “involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence,” many modernist writers in non-Western contexts such as Lu Xun, Premchand, and Yasunari Kawabata, to name just a few, have depicted with poignancy the clutches or ongoing ravages of the past.

Perspectives on modernism entail a retrospective effort of the imagination, even as they are inevitably informed by issues and concerns that are contemporary to ourselves. The continued growth of scale – spatiotemporally, archivally, and textually – in modernist studies at once paves the way and makes demands for understanding the complexities of cultural and intellectual history across geographical boundaries. It also calls for a renewal of attention to approaches to traditions and aesthetic practices that vitally strengthen or disrupt connections between the past, the present, and the future.

This conference invites papers that explore retrospective modernism from diverse angles and contexts. In what ways is modernism related to or disconnected from specific intellectual and living traditions? How do modernism’s revolt against and reconfiguration or revaluation of the



legacy of the past bear upon its transcultural reception, adaptation, and evaluation? How do modernist scholars around the world today tackle modernism's retrospective moments, themes, and practices? And how might a retrospective emphasis contribute to or complicate the development of global modernist studies? We welcome papers that focus on textual analysis, cultural studies, historiographical discussions, theoretical and methodological reflections, as well as interdisciplinary work on art, cinema, theater, and other cultural products.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Invention and evolution of ideas of Modernism
- Modernism and tradition
- Rupture, continuity, and resonance
- History and memory
- Formal experiment and innovation
- Reform and revolution
- War and violence
- Nostalgia, imagination, and fantasy
- Retrospect and prospect
- Primitivism, Futurism, and Presentism
- Personality and impersonality
- Self, character, and identity
- Globalization, modernization, and world systems
- World, globe, and nature
- Translation, communication, and confrontation
- Modernism and the Enlightenment
- Modernism and epistemology
- Modernism and sentimentalism
- Modernism and Romanticism
- Modernism and realism
- Modernism and feminism
- Modernism and phenomenology
- Modernism and liberalism
- Modernism and conservatism
- Modernism, socialism, and communism
- Modernism, nation, and empire
- Modernism and cosmopolitanism
- Modernism and forms of humanism
- Modernism and orientalism
- Modernism and the Canon
- Modernism and folklore
- Modernism and the mass media
- Modernism and pedagogy

Please send abstracts of approximately 250 words, together with short bios, to msiashanghai@fudan.edu.cn by **December 15, 2019**. Participants will be notified in January, 2020.

Conference Organizers:

Nan Zhang (Fudan University)

Liang Chen (Fudan University)

Yuexi Liu (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)

For further information about MSIA, please visit our website:

<https://modernismasia.wixsite.com/main>