

Rethinking China's Future

Gender, Youth, and Technology in post-1990s Chinese Popular Literature

Friday

11:00 am – 12:45 pm

Room E

- Organised by Federica Gamberini
- Fang Wan, Chair
- Federica Gamberini, “All Youth Need is Love: Love Stories, Youth Subjectivity, and Multimodality in Luo Luo’s *The Last Woman Standing* and Jiu Yuehui’s *The Fleet of Time*”
- Chen Ma, “Time Immigrants: A Sense of Risk and Destination”
- Fang Wan, “‘Strong Women’ in an Online Matriarchal World”

The past two decades witnessed an unprecedented technological and economic development in China, inviting Chinese writers to question the foreseeable effects of these changes and rethinking questions of gender and identity. Fostered by the favourable circumstances set by the liberalisation of China’s publishing market and the Internet’s democratisation of writing, Chinese popular literature witnessed a boom in works problematising the construction of the Chinese social reality while representing new forms of subjectivity recording the impact of China’s technological development on gender and cultural identity. This panel presents research in three areas: it discusses how female writers represent womanhood in matriarchy online fiction blurring traditional gender boundaries; how science fiction responds to the ecological challenges of the country problematising human earning for modernity; and how *balinghou* youth narrative challenges normativity to express their generation’s life experiences and concerns. Adopting a feminist, ecological, and a socio-semiotic approach to Chinese popular literature, this panel explores how writers from different age and cultural groups engage with the political and social structure of China, using technology to rethink questions about gender identity and individuality amidst China’s economic boom. Embracing the technological development of their country, Chinese writers, however, took advantage of new technologies—as a medium of communication or as a trope in their stories—to ponder about the role of the individual at the dawn of a new era, where technology could both be an empowering tool and a threat for the human world.

Federica Gamberini, “All Youth Need is Love: Love Stories, Youth Subjectivity and Multimodality in Luo Luo’s *The Last Woman Standing* and Jiu Yuehui’s *The Fleet of Time*”

As the interest toward romantic stories rekindled during the 1980s and the 1990s, idealised representation of love and courtship started appearing on TV and the Internet voicing young people’s life



views and concerns. At the crossroad between romance novels and soap operas, *balinghou* love stories relocate love in a central position in the life of high-school students, but also young and successful career people, to question the role of youth in the 'Chinese dream.' Combining the affordances of their books with movie adaptations, *balinghou* writers challenge social stereotypes related to singlehood and 'precocious love' while opening up a public forum of discussion to celebrate youth's individual choices and to rebel against normativity.

Following Gunther Kress's socio-semiotic approach to multimodality, this presentation investigates love representations, individuality, and self-expression in *balinghou* romantic fiction in two case studies: Luo Luo's *The Last Woman Standing* and Jiu Yehui's *The Fleet of Time*. By looking at these two works, this presentation explores how the individualism of *balinghou* youth narrative underpins a problematisation of the normative function of young people within China's post-Deng society. By employing the affordances of visual modes of communication and writing, *balinghou* romantic narratives not only explore young people's feelings and life views in-depth, but they use courtship as a way to discuss individual's self-assertion, independence, and freedom to choose.

Chen Ma, "Time Immigrants: A Sense of Risk and Destination"

Scholarly discussions on science-fictional accounts of climate change suggest that they have a marked potential impact on the public reaction towards ecological challenges. Scholars have pointed out how the "right elements" of science fiction (SF) participate in the ongoing debate on the advance of climate change. Liu Cixin's *Time Immigrants* (2014) responds to the above discussions with its accentuation of a strong sense of risk which interrogates the illusion of not only environmental well-being but also both humanity and society's well-being. This paper focuses on Liu's interpretation of the risks that develop from the transitional status of a modernised society facing climate change. He delineates a developing risk society in which human yearnings for a more modernised world form a stark contrast with their inherent insecurity regarding the very same world they created. In his explorations of the changing natural landscapes over different time periods, he also stresses how people's internal landscapes are affected continuously and reshaped by climate change and the external environment.

Fang Wan, "'Strong Women' in an Online Matriarchal World"

Chinese internet literature has flourished since the end of the 1990s. The low threshold of online publishing provides some traditionally marginalised groups, such as women, a relatively free platform to express their thoughts and start writing creatively. In light of this, this essay will focus on the vital role of online female writing in the development of Chinese women's literature.

This essay will discuss *Flowers of Four Seasons* (*Sishi huakai*, 四时花开) by Gongteng Shenxiu 宫藤深秀, a representative matriarchy novel published in *Jinjiang Literature City* in 2006. Through analysing this novel, this essay argues that matriarchy fiction's construction of a women's space to be produced and consumed is a 'dance with shackles'. Female authors and readers of matriarchy fiction have indeed constructed a women's space where they can discuss their desires, imagine alternative gender relations, and blur traditional gender boundaries. However, rather than a 'space of their own' away from state and market intervention, their rebellious potential is limited by the constant negotiation of authors' intentions, readers' expectations, economic factors, state censorship, and national and transnational gender norms.

Recurrence and Role of Supernatural Elements in Contemporary Sinophone Literature

Four Case Studies

Thursday

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

Room E

- Martina Renata Prosperi, “Syaman Rapongan and His ‘Mythology of Badai Bay’: Legendary Demons and Supernatural Elements as Keywords in a Communication between Humans and the Environment”
- Eugenia Tizzano, “The Fantastic in Bo Yang: The Supernatural as a Way to Explore the Human Nature”
- Alessandra Pezza, “Theorising the Use of the Supernatural in Order to Criticise Chinese Reality: Apports and Limitations of Yan Lianke’s ‘Mythorealism’”
- Chiara Cigarini, Chiara Cigarini, “Han Song’s Supernatural Science Fiction: Re-Enchanting Time, Space and Character in his ‘Tales of (Technological) Anomalies’”

From *zhiguai* literary tradition up to nowadays Sinophone fiction, science fiction, folktales, and aboriginal legends, the recurrence of the supernatural element as a crucial narrative device has always been bearing particular significance and more or less patent meanings, both vis-à-vis the author’s own viewpoint and goals, and vis-à-vis the cultural, and social environment in which each literary work is respectively embedded.

This panel proposal represents a four-case study attempt to pay equal attention to both of the above-mentioned aspects, by carrying out deep and innovative literary analysis, and by avoiding any easy banalisation seeing the literary medium under the unique interpretation of social criticism and political engagement.

Ranging from Taiwan-based authors, the likes of Henan-born Bo Yang (1920–2008) and Lanyu-born Syaman Rapongan (1957–), to voices from Mainland China, such as Yan Lianke (1958–) and Han Song (1965–), this panel consequently aims at investigating the recurrence and role of supernatural elements within contemporary Sinophone literature, by providing a stimulating selection of well diverse approaches and perspectives.

Martina Renata Prosperi, “Syaman Rapongan and His ‘Mythology of Badai Bay’: Legendary Demons and Supernatural Elements as Keywords in a Communication between Humans and the Environment”

Syaman Rapongan 夏曼·藍波安 (1957–), grows up on Lanyu until the end of the 70s, when the lifestyle of Tao people is still based on traditional activities, relying on fishing and agriculture for sustenance. As a teenager, he moves to Taidong and his departure is seen as a betrayal. In the 80s, however, a deposit of radioactive waste is built on Lanyu and Syaman Rapongan decides to go home and participate in the protests. Whereas moving to Taiwan had meant giving up his people’s values and conquering a modernized worldview, this return leads him back to his origins, via the re-appropriation of Tao legends, rituals, and fishing skills. His first work, *Badaiwan de shenhua* 八代湾的神话 (*The Mythology of Badai Bay*, 1992), a collection of Tao tales, myths, and supernatural stories, well represents his tribe’s holistic



vision of an equally human, natural, and supernatural universe. By analyzing the role of demons and spirits from the abovementioned mythology, this research demonstrates how the supernatural element is not here a literary device, but rather the embodiment of a certain worldview, in which men do not survive the irrational by subjugating it, but cohabiting its very same environment.

Eugenia Tizzano, “The Fantastic in Bo Yang: The Supernatural as a Way to Explore the Human Nature”

Born in 1920 in Henan province, Bo Yang 柏杨 (1920–2008) moved to Taiwan after the Nationalist Party lost the civil war in 1949, together with millions of Chinese who arrived on the island virtually destitute. During the 50s, he took up fiction-writing as a profession and, using a literary style all his own, started writing newspaper columns that clearly show his interest in exposing the darker side of society. Best known for his non-fiction works on Chinese history and for his essays on political and cultural criticism, Bo Yang has also left a few collections of short stories in which he explores the human nature in all its aspects. In some of these tales, we find motifs and themes typical of the traditional ghost tales mingling with the everyday reality of protagonists deeply immersed in their modern lives. These supernatural elements seem to be the best way to depict the loneliness and longing for a home experienced by the protagonists, their desire to reunite to the loved ones and the echoes of a past that keeps on haunting their present life.

Based on Remo Ceserani’s (Ceserani; 1996) suggestion to distinguish recurrent narrative strategies and themes in the fictional works, this paper proposes a close reading of Bo Yang’s short stories with supernatural elements and aims at identifying the rhetorical devices and thematic systems that activate the fantastic mode inside the stories.

Alessandra Pezza, “Theorising the Use of the Supernatural in Order to Criticise Chinese Reality: Apports and Limitations of Yan Lianke’s ‘Mythorealism’”

In his essay collection, *Faxian xiaoshuo* 发现小说 (2011), contemporary Chinese writer Yan Lianke 阎连科 (1958–) theorised the traits of a literary style, that he calls *shenshizhuyi* 神现实主义 (mythorealism), characterising his writing as well as that of a number of his colleagues.

He describes it as a way to represent the “inner reality” of contemporary China, something that, he claims, is only possible by eliminating the pretence of recognising a rational logic behind facts. It is therefore in the absurd, in the grotesque, and in the supernatural, intended both as incredible facts that happen in the real world as well as in a recourse to myth and to Chinese folkloric beliefs, that the author identifies the key to really understand Chinese society. All those features are presented as being more real than reality itself, and thus become a way to criticise Chinese reality.

While the author’s attempt to point out to a trend to deform reality as a new, paradoxical form of realism in Chinese literature has the value of highlighting the possibility of a common language in a generation of writers, as well as, while not unique in this, the merit of emphasising the feeling of uncertainty induced by the rapid changes of contemporary China, it also has, we argue, the potential risk of banalising different uses of the literary medium under the unique interpretation of social criticism and political engagement.

Chiara Cigarini, “Han Song’s Supernatural Science Fiction: Re-Enchanting Time, Space and Character in his ‘Tales of (Technological) Anomalies’”

The Xinhua journalist and prolific Chinese science fiction author Han Song 韩松 (1965–) often unsettles the rationale of this genre by enhancing supernatural elements into its production. This essay seeks to underscore the thematic parallelism binding him to the *zhiguai* literary tradition, especially by focusing on the shift from science-fiction conventions to supernaturalism which is typical of the ancient Chinese

literary tradition, and the way in which this change of perspective is a feature of how Han represents elements such as space, time and characters. Some of his most representative works will be examined in order to highlight his unique re-enchantment of the science fiction genre through, on the one hand, the “nativisation” of the genre within Chinese traditions, and on the other, the commentary and critique of a highly technological and globalised contemporary world.

Papers on Modern Literature VII

Late Qing to Republic

Thursday


9:00 am – 10:45 am

Room D

- Chaired by Shaw-Yu Pan
- Shuowin Chen, “The Extraordinary Adventure of Arsène Lupin in China”
- Yangyang Lan, “Poetic Records of the Local: Bamboo-Branch Songs of Berlin (1887–1925)”
- Shaw-Yu Pan, “Appropriating the West: On Mandarin Duck and Butterfly Writers’ ‘Western’ Stories”
- Yanping Gao, “Can Nationalism Save China? Constructing Nationalism in the Discourse about ‘Yellow Peril’ and ‘Chinese National Character’ in Lao She’s Novel *Mr. Ma & Son: A Sojourn in London*”

Shuowin Chen, “The Extraordinary Adventure of Arsène Lupin in China”

During the late Qing and early Republican period, translated western detective novels are popular in China, especially Conan Doyle’s famous stories of Sherlock Holmes. In 1886, Zhang Kunde firstly translated the stories of Sherlock Holmes into Chinese. In the next decade, Chinese translation of this famous British detective stories increased continuously, and to a certain extent, inspired Chinese writers to create their own detective novels. The translation and transculturation of Sherlock Holmes’s stories had already attracted a lot of scholars’ interests. However, compared to the attention that Sherlock Holmes obtained, little research has been done on the famous “gentleman-cambrioleur” (gentleman thief), Arsène Lupin’s adventures. This paper focuses on the examination of Chinese translation of Arsène Lupin’s stories during the 20th century in China. Through comparing the translation and the original French works, English versions, this paper attempts to explore the characteristics of the Chinese translation and interpretation of these novels of Maurice Leblanc. This paper points out, at the beginning of 1910s, as a “gentleman-cambrioleur,” the image of Arsène Lupin in the Chinese translation is quite semi-villainous. However, when the times came to the late 1920s, Chinese translators, such as Zhuo Shuojuan, started to name this mercurial character as ancient Chinese warrior fold hero Xia. With that, Sun Liaohong, a famous popular novelist in Shanghai, created his own novels about the legendary life of a Chinese hero Lu Ping, he called it “Arsène Lupin in the East,” and achieved a huge success. What happened behind the transformation of the image of Arsène Lupin, from thief to folk hero? Is there any difference between Lupin and Lu Ping? By comparing and close reading, this paper not only discusses how Chinese translators and readers presented their cultural imagination by translating but also demonstrates how their translation represent the dialogue between the Chinese and Western literary tradition and cultural values, that means, to illustrate the cultural connotation that this extraordinary adventure of Arsène Lupin in modern china reflected.



Yangyang Lan, “Poetic Records of the Local: Bamboo-branch Songs of Berlin (1887–1925)”

Among the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many people from China traveled or sojourned in Germany for different reasons, and with different genres, they recorded their oversea experiences. Bamboo-branch songs (*zhuzhici* 竹枝詞), a genre of classical Chinese poetry, because of its long tradition of describing local lives and folkways, was adopted also to write foreign scenes. I collected totally 97 bamboo-branch songs of by 7 authors from 1887, the year the earliest author of them, Pan Feisheng 潘飛聲 (1858–1934), arrived Berlin, to 1925, when the latest group of *zhuzhici* were published. They display the local life of Berlin, record daily tours of the authors and reveal the thinking of the authors about historical events in Germany. First, I introduce the identities of the authors and the publication of the poems. Secondly, I examine one group of 24 poems by Pan Feisheng, which display the local lives of Berlin by focusing on women’s daily lives. Thirdly, *zhuzhici* also focuses on the daily trip of the sojourners in Berlin. Zhang Ruobai 張若柏 (?–1941)’s twenty poems, which were written soon after he came back to China, restore a route of a trip in Berlin with a timeline of one day. Finally, I analyze observations about events in Germany in *zhuzhici*, taking Yang Qi 楊圻 (1875–1941)’s one group of poems titled *The Resentment of Berlin* (*Bolin yuan* 柏林怨) as an example.

Shaw-Yu Pan, “Appropriating the West: On Mandarin Duck and Butterfly Writers’ ‘Western’ Stories”

During the early Republican period, the so-called “Mandarin Duck and Butterfly writers” (*yuanyang hudie pai*) published over a hundred pieces of peculiar stories that embodied their “Occidentalism.” The major contributors of these stories include Zhou Shoujuan (1895–1968) and Yao Yuanchu (1892–1954), two Butterfly writers who were familiar with the late Qing translations of Western literature. They forged the names of their “Western authors” as if those were translations of Western literature, or simply had their European characters act against European backdrop. In this paper, I will focus on these “seemingly Western stories” and examine their literary values and social significance. I will investigate Zhou’s and Yao’s reference of late Qing translations and see how these texts helped with constructing specific imaginations of the West. Secondly, I will analyse how Zhou and Yao imitated the literary techniques, thoughts and subjects of Western literature. Also, I will study how they adapted the features of classical Chinese literature and combined them with Western resource. If the importance of translating foreign literature is to expand and enrich the horizon and source of native literature, to what end, then, is the composition of a pseudotranslation? How do we explain the existence of these appeared-to-be-Western stories from the perspective of modern Chinese literary history? Furthermore, what sort of assumption or imagination of the Western culture did they reveal and what was their impact on modern Chinese literature? This paper intends to provide thoughts to these questions.

Yanping Gao, “Can Nationalism Save China? Constructing Nationalism in the Discourse about ‘Yellow Peril’ and ‘Chinese National Character’ in Lao She’s Novel *Mr. Ma & Son: A Sojourn in London*”

Writing in Chinese in 1929 in London, Chinese writer Lao She (1899–1966) appealed through a literary character Ma Wei in *Mr. Ma & Son*, that “*only nationalism can save China!*” The idea of nationalism, on the one hand, related to China’s political and cultural turmoil at the time, and on the other hand, was stimulated by the racial discrimination encountered by Mr Ma and his son Ma Wei. The idea of nationalism is also established through Lao’s criticism to Chinese national character. Lao’s writing of national character is influenced by the new writing tradition of criticising national character established since Lu Xun’s *A Story of Ah Q* (1921). This article seeks to point out that Lao’s novel is a response to both the discourse about “Yellow Peril” in Western Countries and the criticism of the national character in modern Chinese literary writings. In this context, the idea of nationalism was seen as a way out for

China. However, the similarity between progressive Chinese intellectuals and the old generation on the issues towards women in the novel seems to imply that the criticism of national character is incomplete and that nationalism is still a problematical male-dominated discourse. Ma's "escape" from London, seems to put a question mark on whether nationalism can save China. Analogically, Lao's novel can be regarded as a metaphor of modern Chinese intellectuals seeking a way out of China through nationalism.

Papers on Modern Literature VI

Contact

Wednesday

4:00 pm – 5:45 pm

Room E

- Chaired by Letizia Fusini
- Letizia Fusini, "Modern yet Traditional: Reconfiguring (Western) Tragedy in Early-Republican China"
- Yichun Xu, "Fashioning Courtesans in Suzhou Wu: Topolect and Gender in Shanghai Courtesan Novels"
- Congshuo Li, "Ling and Woolf: Women Writers' Biographical Writing in a Modernist Transcultural Context"
- Martin Blahota, "Anti-Western Westernization: Akutagawa's Devils in Fiction of East Asian Colonial Subjects"

Letizia Fusini, "Modern yet Traditional: Reconfiguring (Western) Tragedy in Early-Republican China"

One of the key features of the New Culture and May Fourth Movement was the discussion of Western tragic theory and dramaturgy, which had been introduced to China since the late-Qing period through Japan. As has been noted (Tang, 2000; Wang, 2004), tragedy was acclaimed as a new, 'civilised' and 'progressive' form of drama, an incarnation of the sublime (as per Western standards), and a powerful pedagogic tool capable of shaking the social and historical consciousness of the Chinese in the aftermath of the century of humiliation. While the interest in tragedy was clearly sparked by the widely accepted assumption that an analogous genre had never existed in China, the way in which it was interpreted and adapted to the Chinese context suggests that a traditional 'indigenous' filter was applied to define its supposed 'modernity'. Although the term *beiju* was originally coined in Meiji Japan to translate the German *Trauerspiel*, *bei* is one of the cardinal emotions in traditional Chinese texts and among those typically associated with melancholy, frequently mentioned in premodern Chinese poetry and sometimes even preferred to joy, for its ability to strengthen the spirit rather than saddening or weakening it (Cheng, 2001). In premodern China melancholy, linked to the autumnal season and to the experience of loss and/or separation, was considered a gateway to contemplation and reflection, and from a Confucian perspective, a "source of motivating force for self-cultivation" (ibid.) and the construction of social harmony. Similarly, in May Fourth China, *beiju* was meant to arouse a sense of compassion and indignation in the audience/readers, to compel them to combat injustice and seek the common good in real life. Through a cross-comparison of Chinese conceptions of *beiju* in the May Fourth era and traditional views of melancholy and sadness, this paper will seek to show that the Chinese



reception of (Western) tragedy, was informed by the rejuvenation of traditional ideas rather than the introduction of purely 'Western' theories.

Yichun Xu, "Fashioning Courtesans in Suzhou Wu: Topolect and Gender in Shanghai Courtesan Novels"

Wu is one of the few topolects in China having a rich literary tradition. The earliest work written with Wu topolect is usually traced to the seventeenth century. A much more recent example is the 2015 winner of the Mao Dun Literature Prize, *Blossom*. During the late Qing and Republican eras, Wu topolect writings were produced on a hitherto unknown scale. This paper discusses the role Wu topolect courtesan writings played in constructing Wu topolect as the language spoken by courtesans and of the entertainment world in general, both in the diegetic world of fictional texts and in the reality beyond them by examining two Wu topolect courtesan novels—*Nine-Tailed Turtle* and *Romance on Hu River*. I contend that it is the Shanghai entertainment world, the commercial print industry, and certain traditions within pre-modern Chinese literature—in particular, folksongs in Suzhou Wu on secret love—that conspired to forge the Wu-topolect (especially Suzhou Wu) courtesan novel tradition. Apart from the interaction between the fictionality and the reality, I also argue the use of Suzhou Wu in courtesan fiction not only can reflect male writers' linguistic and stylistic preference for the woman of Suzhou, but also their anxiety about creating a safe distance between themselves and the courtesan world, as can be seen in the two novels where Suzhou-Wu is largely used in a gendered, professional, and site-specific manner. Furthermore, the association of courtesans/prostitutes with Wu dialect continues on into the Republican era and even into post-Mao China.

Congshuo Li, "Ling and Woolf: Women Writers' Biographical Writing in a Modernist Transcultural Context"

In the first half of the 20th century, Ling Shuhua and Virginia Woolf were two women writers who came from different cultures, yet they communicated across cultural boundaries. Woolf was one of the foremost English writers of the twentieth century; Ling was a Chinese writer and painter during the same era. In their respective countries, they were members of influential literary groups of writers, and they had close connections. Their similar contributions to women's writing through subverting the traditional notions of gender and women's writing styles are therefore worthy of being studied.

Here I focus on their representative biographical works: *Ancient Melodies* and *Orlando: A Biography*. *Orlando* is Woolf's 1928 fictional biography published; *Ancient Melodies* is Ling's 1953 autobiographical novel. They are related to the genre of biographical writings, but meanwhile, they distinguish from normal biographies and autobiographies in the combination of fact and fiction; moreover, they both achieve self-representation through writing others. Also, it is noticeable that the support of Woolf was significant in Ling's English autobiographical writing.

Therefore, I focused on these works and their correspondence between 1938–39. I explored how their transcultural communication contributes to Ling's autobiographical project; furthermore, I have borrowed the theory of metahistory to reinterpret the relation between the biographer and the subject; I have also utilised theories of gender and explored their insightful reflection on gender issues in their biographical and autobiographical writing.

Martin Blahota, "Anti-Western Westernisation: Akutagawa's Devils in Fiction of East Asian Colonial Subjects"

From the perspective of the coloniser, the Japanese Empire was founded on the ideals of Pan-Asianism and liberation from the West. It is, therefore, fascinating how many works of fiction created by colonial



subjects throughout the Empire deal with Christianity. Some of them, such as Manchukuo Jue Qing's *Defeated Escape* (1940) or Taiwanese Zhou Jinbo's *A Devil's Messenger* (1945) seem to mirror the Japanese war propaganda that was profoundly anti-Western. However, especially in Manchukuo, Christianity was addressed positively by many writers as well. This paper suggests that the colonial subjects were influenced not only by Japanese propaganda but also by modern Japanese authors such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke whose attitudes towards the West and Christianity were far more complex. This study analyses the paradox of literature's westernisation under the Japanese colonisation and offers new insights into the East Asian colonial modernity.

Papers on Modern Literature V

Urban Spaces

Wednesday

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

Room E

- Chaired by Nicoletta Pesaro
- Zhuyuan Han, "The Public Space in Reality and Imagination: The Coffeehouse and Teahouse as Cultural Phenomena in Republican Shanghai (1920s–1930s)"
- Lok Yee Tang, "Rewriting as a Dialogue with Hong Kong: The Self-Rewriting of Yesi's *Cities of Memories, Cities of Fictions*"
- Giulia Rampolla, "Cityscapes of Otherness: The Representation of the Urban Space in Deng Yiguang's Tales of Shenzhen"

Zhuyuan Han, "The Public Space in Reality and Imagination: The Coffeehouse and Teahouse as Cultural Phenomena in Republican Shanghai (1920s–1930s)"

The coffeehouse emerged as an unprecedented popular leisure spot in Shanghai during the 1920s. Accordingly, drinking coffee became prevalent among elite men and women who advocated a modern lifestyle, especially cultural intellectuals, and coffeehouses were soon favoured by many writers and artists for social gatherings. Such a kind of gathering resembled the phenomenon of "salon" indigenous to the 17th century France. In the meantime, the teahouse (*chaguan*), which had long functioned as a popular place for social gatherings in China, had experienced self-transformation to cope with the rapidly developing urban environment. Many teahouses in Republican Shanghai also embraced modern and Avant-grade aesthetic ideologies as coffeehouses did. The stimulated "tea talk meetings" (*chahua hui*) phenomenon then prevailed among Republican cultural elites, which was vital to inspiring literary and cultural productions. "Tea" and "coffee" became important cultural symbols, with the actual gatherings that happened in teahouses and coffeehouses extended to the print media. Two best examples are the "Coffee Seats" (*Kafeizuo*) column published on Shenbao in the late 1920s and the journal entitled Literature and Art Tea Talk (*Wenyi chahua*) first produced in the early 1930s, where articles on literary and artistic topics were solicited and cultural elites could participate another form of gathering in an imagined public cultural space. Referring to the notion of "public sphere," "structure of feeling," and some important memory theories, this paper is going to investigate how the coffeehouse and teahouse as both physical and imagined social spaces activated significant cultural implications and were closely related to the identity politics of intellectuals in Republican Shanghai during the 1920s and 1930s. Regarding the



teahouse/coffeehouse as important public sites that accommodated multilayered elements of cultural modernity and “tea/ coffee” as conspicuous cultural symbols manifested in literature and popular culture, I intend to demonstrate that both the concrete architectures and abstract symbols are meaningful repositories of particular cultural memory. In this sense, I will also discuss how the coffeehouse and teahouse have evoked nostalgic reminiscence in contemporary China, and how particular architectures can inspire abundant reimaginations of the past and accommodate various kinds of memory.

Lok Yee Tang, “Rewriting as a Dialogue with Hong Kong: The Self-Rewriting of Yesi’s *Cities of Memories, Cities of Fictions*”

Undergoing the drastic social and political changes in Hong Kong since the 1990s, Hong Kong writers had attempted to respond to the historical context and to overcome the constraints of writing Hong Kong by means of rewriting their own works. Yesi (Leung Ping-kwan, 1949–2013), one of the most important writers and scholars of contemporary Hong Kong Literature, had repeatedly revised his travelogue *Journey of the Worry Dolls* (1983) until the finalised version *Cities of Memories, Cities of Fictions* was published in 1993. Self-rewriting, with the characteristics of double contextualisation and historicisation of the creative process, provided important cases to study how the conscious adjustments of writing intentions and strategies respond or intervene the social and cultural changes. However, previous studies on Yesi seldom put emphasis on the underlying meaning of the act of rewriting. As I would like to argue in this paper, Yesi intentionally adopted “self-rewriting” as a writing strategy to re-investigate the local cultural identity and evaluate the ossified representation of Hong Kong. My study aims to set out a new approach to the study of Yesi’s literary and cultural perspectives and provide a foundation for further studies on the literary phenomenon of “self-rewriting” in Hong Kong. This paper will first analyse how Yesi viewed the intersubjectivity of “dialogue” as a crucial attitude to understand the complexity of Hong Kong culture and to amend the existing misrepresentations. Based on the comparison of the versions of his works, the paper will then examine how the writer demonstrated a transtemporal “dialogue” through rewriting.

Giulia Rampolla, “Cityscapes of Otherness: The Representation of the Urban Space in Deng Yiguang’s *Tales of Shenzhen*”

This paper provides an in-depth overview of the urban fiction produced by the contemporary Chinese writer Deng Yiguang from 2010 onwards, after that he has permanently moved to Shenzhen. It has the intended purpose to shed some light on Deng Yiguang’s singular perspective upon the representation of the present-day Chinese metropolis and, more specifically, to investigate into the way he portrays the relationship between city dwellers and the urban space and into the meaning of the central role of the public spaces within his works. By mainly focusing on the analysis of some short stories selected from his three well-known collections, whose titles are *Shenzhen zai beiwei 22°27–22°52*, *Ni keyi rang baihe shengzhang*, and *Shenzhen lan*, which all belong to the so-called “Shenzhen series,” I will further attempt to demonstrate that the innovative strategies elaborated by Deng Yiguang to narrate the urban fabric, have exerted a crucial influence over the development of the aesthetic standards of 21st century “new urban literature” and have contributed to enrich the collective image of Shenzhen. Through the realist account of the private stories and of the hardships experienced by a wide range of citizens, who often belong to the lower social strata and never achieve their “urban dream,” this writer provides the reader with an insight into the human side of China’s restless processes of urbanisation and globalisation. Deng Yiguang’s literary works will be examined within the frame of “new urban fiction,” “subaltern literature,” and “Shenzhen’s narrative.”

Papers on Modern Literature IV

Poetry

Wednesday

11:00 am – 12:45 pm

- Chaired by Gary Chi Chung Tsang
- Gary Chi Chung Tsang, “A Study on the Hermeneutics and Annotation of *ci* Poetry in Republican China (1911–1949)”
- Wai Tsui, “Using Classical Styles for New Experiences: A Study of Liao Entao’s 廖恩燾 (1864–1954) Overseas Poetry”
- Chin Fung Ng, “Zhang Ruzhao (1900–1969) and Her Buddhist Lifestyle of ‘Agricultural Chan’”
- Robert Tsaturyan, “A Study on the Question of ‘Trauma’ in Modern Chinese Poetry: Hu Feng and the Birth of Trauma Theory”
- Paula Teodorescu (Pascaru), “Poet Yang Li 杨黎, from Macho Man to Rubber Man”

Gary Chi Chung Tsang, “A Study on the Hermeneutics and Annotation of *ci* Poetry in Republican China (1911–1949)”

Apart from publishing original texts, annotation is an important way for the propagation of classical literature in Republican China. The development of *ci* annotations had been thriving with a rapid increase in number in Republican China. These *ci* annotations not only help readers understand the texts through studying semantic, explanation of writing background, and appreciation of writing skills, some annotators may have infiltrated their thoughts of *ci* in their annotation works, which may have turned annotation into a form of hermeneutics. This may seem as a phenomena of inherence and transformation of theory of *jituoshuo* 寄託說 from Changzhou School. *Jituoshuo* is always an important topic in *ci* study, since it was proposed by the Changzhou School 常州派 in Qing Dynasty. One of the great impacts of *jituoshuo* in late Qing is encouraging *ci* writers to project their sadness and resentment towards politics in their *ci* compositions. However, when *ci* composition was less prevalent in Republican China (1911–1949), writers and scholars tried to imply their inherence and transformation of theory of *jituoshuo* in their *ci* annotation. This is a significance feature of *ci* study in Republican China that worth further investigation. This paper will examine and explore the relationship between *ci* annotation and hermeneutics, and the acceptance of the *jituoshuo* through study of difference *ci* annotation published in Republican China.

Wai Tsui, “Using Classical Styles for New Experiences: A Study of Liao Entao’s 廖恩燾 (1864–1954) Overseas Poetry”

A common critique of late Qing *ci* poetry is its “absence” in the so-called “literary revolution” that started in the late 19th century. Among all other genres, *ci* poetry appears to be particularly conservative in its forms, themes, imageries and language. Leaders of the new literary group, like Hu Shi, often criticised these *ci* poems being “limited in creativity” and “unrelated to the real world”. These comments continue to influence scholars of Chinese literature, assuming that *ci* has not evolved in an innovative manner facing the unique pressure of modernisation. The heavy borrowing of masterpieces in *ci* writing reinforces this general impression. The article will re-evaluate the *ci* poems involved and challenge this conclusion. The drastic change in political and social conditions from late Qing to the Republican era had inevitably affected the lives and thought of poets. Some poets even had the experience of travelling abroad. When

expressing these new experiences, however, they chose a rather traditional form of literature, *ci* poetry. I focus on Liao Entao, a well-known poet and diplomat of Qing and Republic of China, who travelled extensively around South America, Japan, and Southeast Asia. He spent his final years in Hong Kong. The research argues that the persistence in using a traditional form is a strategy consciously adopted by the poet, in order to express complex feeling he encountered when experiencing something new. It will show how time-honoured tradition continued to influence and shape the modern literary field.

Chin Fung Ng, “Zhang Ruzhao (1900–1969) and Her Buddhist Lifestyle of ‘Agricultural Chan’”

The concept of “agricultural Chan” in Chinese Chan Buddhism can be traced back to medieval China. In premodern eras, many monastics followed the agricultural way of life of settling on mountains and to support themselves by farm labour. During the Republican period, such lifestyle was once again greatly advocated when Buddhism was under reform. Zhang Ruzhao (1900–1969) was one of the female monastics who responded to the reform and observed the practices of agricultural Chan. In the first half of her life, Zhang was not only a prominent poet but also an activist who has engaged in various political and feminist movements. But because of different personal and political disappointments, Zhang later decided to enter the Buddha’s world and eventually ordained as a nun. Not giving up literature even after turning to Buddhism, Zhang recorded her life through many literary writings such as poetry and prose. However, compared to other laywomen and nuns in the same period, far little attention has been paid to Zhang’s life and literature, not to mention her Buddhist practices and thoughts. In the light of this, this paper seeks to look into the idea of agricultural Chan Zhang adopted from the 1930s, the sources which inspired Zhang to put such lifestyle into practice, how she devoted her Buddhist life to the practice of agricultural Chan, and how such way of life was related to the Buddhist reform movement in modern China, by reviewing selected literary works, autobiographical accounts, and correspondence.

Robert Tsaturyan, “A Study on the Question of ‘Trauma’ in Modern Chinese Poetry: Hu Feng and the Birth of Trauma Theory”

In January 1945, Hu Feng 胡風 (1902–1985) published an article in the first issue of the magazine *Xiwang* 希望 (“Hope”) which he was editing during the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937–1945). The article, entitled *Situating Ourselves In the Struggle for Democracy* (*Zhishen zai wei minzhu de douzheng limian* 置身在為民主的鬥爭裡面), would later become a milestone for the discussion of “trauma” (*chuangshang* 創傷) in Chinese literary circles.

In this paper, I address the birth and discussion of the concept of “trauma” in the scope of Chinese literary-theoretical writings, its cultural, historical, and political manifestations in literary forms—namely poetry. On the examples of Hu’s poetry and poetry translation practices, I show that the symbolic use of poetic texts for national salvation, in line with his views on the centrality of the writer’s subjectivity and individuality, is unique to his practice of literature.

The research aims at establishing a foundation for poetry-based trauma studies in modern Chinese literature, in anticipation of the coming human-made disasters of the second half of the twentieth century, while making distinctions between the apocalyptic war-time poetry of Hu, the later *menglong* poetry of the generation that experienced the Cultural Revolution, and the ‘poetry of silence,’ as a response to the Tiananmen incident of 1989.

As the title of Hu’s most apocalyptic poem says, “Time has begun!” For the poet, it was the paradoxical time of both victorious resistance and defeat.

Paula Teodorescu (Pascaru), “Poet Yang Li 杨黎, from Macho Man to Rubber Man”

The Chinese avant-garde movement from the '80s brought a sum of changes and innovations meant to redefine the margins of Chinese literature as it was known before. In poetry, the colloquial movement started in the '80s through the voices of groups like Tamen, Feifei, Macho Men, and continued its activity during the commercial years of the '90s and generated replicators in the 2000s: Xiangpi, Guopi, Jie, Haidao, settling its firm position on the Chinese literary scene. The constant presence in all these colloquial experiments is poet Yang Li who started his poetry journey along with the group Macho Men, adopting a frenetic, rebellious, colloquial, and masculine poetry. He then wrote poetry under the vague principles promoted by Feifei, and, in the end, became the main representative of the avantgardist project which still continues to stir up controversies and challenges, Eraser or Rubber Literature 橡皮文学.

This paper examines the way Yang Li moved from a colloquial style of creating poetry to another, culminating with *xiangpi*. Although Xiangpi was one of the dominant avantgarde sites at the beginning of the 2000s, marking a continuation of the colloquial trend in poetry in the new century, was rarely the object of analysis of research studies. The site ceased its activity, but the group that activated back then still continues to organise events and produce literature under this name, *xiangpi*. Some of the *xiangpi* “products” attracted a lot controversy and incited numerous discussions about poetry's definition, the new margins of Chinese poetry, the relationship between Chinese classical poetry and Chinese contemporary poetry, Chinese poetry's identity, the “anxiety” of Western influences and so on. The main director of this project is poet Yang Li who makes sure *xiangpi* and its principles continue to shape Chinese contemporary poetry.

Papers on Modern Literature III

Republican

Wednesday

9:00 am – 10:45 am

Room E

- Chaired by Connie Ho-yee Kwong
- Daniele Beltrame, “A Forward-Looking Nostalgia: Domesticating Change through Popular Fiction in Republican China. The Case of Bao Tianxiao”
- Zheng Lin, “Chinese Facing the World in 1921: Guo Moruo and Yu Dafu as Case Studies”
- Radek Pelucha, “Yu Dafu and the Problem of Self-Expression”
- Connie Ho-yee Kwong, “Literary Translation as Strategy of Resistance: Ye Lingfeng's Transcultural Reading of European War Literature during the Second Sino-Japanese War”
- Hsiu-Mei Lo, “The Cross-border Journey of Wang Canzhi and the Meanings of Wang Canzhi as a Researcher for Her Mother Qiu Jin: Also, on the Significance of Being a Female Writer of Classical Literature Who Came to Taiwan in Postwar Period”

Daniele Beltrame, “A Forward-Looking Nostalgia: Domesticating Change through Popular Fiction in Republican China. The Case of Bao Tianxiao”

Popular fiction, or Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies school, was a particularly successful literary trend in China from the late Qing through the Republican period. Most of its authors were active in Shanghai and many of them were offspring of gentry families from nearby cities like Suzhou. Literary talents from that



city were the heirs to an outstanding tradition and in their fiction and essays, the nostalgia for Ming-Qing style and topics is evident, especially in the relevance they ascribed to *qing* 情. They enjoyed old-style literati habits: simplicity, restraint, and the preservation of established forms marked their works and lives. The pre-eminence of romance, mixed with a sentimental view of the past, traces a direct link with the past tradition of mournful distress for a lost paradise of sophistication, love and beauty at the beginning of the Qing era. The freedom of love, even though only enacted in the secluded space of the brothel, was also the early expression of modern consciousness. Through the example of Bao Tianxiao, a representative of Suzhou cultural tradition in modern times, this paper seeks to demonstrate how the Aufhebung of the old contributed to welcome still uncharted modernity. Bao Tianxiao was open to a by then inevitable progress but could not hide his nostalgia of the past, like writers from Suzhou after the fall of the Ming. In a circular motion to find solutions to national salvation and social change, nostalgia, and romance helped accommodating to the trauma of the present.

Zheng Lin, “Chinese Facing the World in 1921: Guo Moruo and Yu Dafu as Case Studies”

This paper aims to examine how Chinese intellectuals established their self-identity both as a Chinese and a cosmopolitan through their experience of studying abroad in the early 20th Century, choosing Guo Moruo and Yu Dafu as case studies, both of whom had studied in Japan and founded the Creation Society. Guo's *Goddess* and Yu's *Sink* were respectively the first collections of modern Chinese poems and fictions, both published in 1921.

In *Goddess*, Guo created a series of protagonists who represents a modern Chinese cosmopolitan enthusiastically embracing the new world and the new era. The *Heavenly Hound* is a declaration of self-discovery proudly howled by Chinese after the May Forth. The *Phoenix Nirvana* represents the death of old China and the rebirth of new China on the horizon of globalisation. In *Morning* the protagonist greets various regions of the world and thus maps an imaginative global trip.

With relation to *Sink*, the protagonist expressed the patriotic enthusiasm for his motherland beneath the repressed lust for women, and thus subtly shift the object of desire to China. The protagonists of Yu suffer from their self-identities tore between China and Japan. Since 1895, Japan had been the enemy meanwhile the model for China, therefore, the seduction of the Japanese prostitute embodies both the attraction and threat of modern Westernised imperialism to Chinese.

The literary texts of Guo Moruo and Yu Dafu demonstrate two typical sometimes ambiguously mingled self-identities of modern Chinese intellectuals in a global context during the early 20th Century, confident yet confused, cosmopolitan yet patriotic.

Radek Pelucha, “Yu Dafu and the Problem of Self-expression”

The aim of the proposed paper is to consider the early narrative texts of the modern Chinese writer Yu Dafu (1896–1945) from the two perspectives described below:

What kind of romanticism is Yu Dafu's romanticism? The period of transition from premodern to modern Chinese literature offers itself for closer research into the nature of “isms” that were imported into the texture of the Chinese new literature. Thus, in the conceptual conglomerate that could be termed modern Chinese literary romanticism there can be seen: 1. features transmitted from the Western literary tradition 2. features found in the Chinese sentimental tradition 3. features that arrived through the Japanese recasting of the Western tradition.

What is the nature of Self in Yu Dafu's early writings? How does this Self find its expression through the reactions of the characters in specific situations? The problem of self-expression is both the problem of the relation between the authorial self and the fictional self and the problem of the relation between the culturally conditioned self and the fictional self. The latter relation is of greater importance for the proposed paper as the culturally conditioned self articulates itself into the former relation. The problem of

the Self is, in our view, the most different aspect of Yu Dafu's romanticism as compared to the similar problem in the Western romantic tradition.

Connie Ho-ye Kwong, "Literary Translation as Strategy of Resistance: Ye Lingfeng's Transcultural Reading of European War Literature during the Second Sino-Japanese War"

Against the grim backdrop of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Anti-Japanese war literature has become an important chapter of the modern Chinese literature since the 1930s. However, previous studies focused mainly on Chinese leftist writers' anti-war writings and their national purpose. Discussions on Chinese modernist writers' attachment to the leftist ideology and their contribution to the war-resistance literature have been very limited. A large corpus of Chinese modernists' criticism and translation of European war literature in the particular historical context of China have been overlooked, thus making it a missing chapter in the study of Chinese Anti-Japanese war literature as well as Chinese modernist literature.

This paper focuses on Ye Lingfeng (1905–1975), a renowned Shanghai modernist writer, and his edited literary supplement "Yin Lin" of the newspaper *Li Po* published in Hong Kong during the wartime period. Ye Lingfeng came to Hong Kong in 1937 and published a certain number of criticism and translation of European war literature, including the Chinese translation of Henri Barbusse (1873–1935)'s famous anti-war novel *Le Feu: journal d'une escouade* (Under Fire: The Story of a Squad). This paper investigates how Hong Kong intellectuals tried to seek their freedom of speech by means of literary translation under the severe political censorship imposed by the British colonial government of Hong Kong. From a transcultural and trans-historical perspective, it also studies Barbusse's and Ye Lingfeng's individual perspective on war, internationalism and proletarian revolution, as well as the challenges facing them in Europe and Asia during the wartime.

Hsiu-Mei Lo, "The Cross-border Journey of Wang Canzhi and the Meanings of Wang Canzhi as a Researcher for Her Mother Qiu Jin: Also, on the Significance of Being a Female Writer of Classical Literature Who Came to Taiwan in Postwar Period"

Wang Canzhi (1901-1967) was the daughter of Qiu Jin, and both mother and daughter were female poets. In her early years, Wang Chanzhi attended the Department of Education of Daxia University (now East China Normal University). In 1929, she went to study aircraft manufacturing and aeronautics at New York University's aviation college and served as an instructor after returning home. This made her life experiences and professional identity completely different from most modern female poets. Therefore, this thesis intends to explore Wang Chanzhi's unique professional identity as an instructor in aviation to develop a discussion of the diverse professional identity of female poets. In 1933, Wang Canzhi edited her mother's work *Posthumous Collection of Qiu Jin Female Knight* and appended her own *Xiao Xia Poetry*. In 1935, she published *The thoughts After reading The Frost in June—About deceased mother Ms Qiu Jin*. In 1953, she published the biography of her mother, *Qiu Jin Revolutionary Biography*. In short, the unique professional identity of Wang Canzhi as a researcher for her mother, Qiu Jin, is the second focus of this thesis. Finally, Wang Canzhi settled in Taiwan in 1953 and died in 1967. She was also one of the post-war female writers, but she was not a mainstream writer. Her fifteen-year life in Taiwan was almost unknown, and very little research has been done about Wang Canzhi. Therefore, discussing the significance of Wang Canzhi as a Taiwanese female writer after the war is the third focus of this thesis.

Cultural Exchanges and Translations in Modern China

1900–1930

Thursday

11:00 am – 12:45 pm

Room D

- Organised by Ting-Kit Kevin Yau
- Chaired by Man-Chi Lo
- Ting-Kit Kevin Yau, “Translating Counter-Enlightenment into China: The Translations by Cai Yuan-pei in 1900–1917”
- Man-Chi Lo, “The Cultural Exchange between China and Japan in the 1920s’ Shanghai— Centering the Relationship of Tian Han and Uchiyama Kanzō”
- Meng-Che Tsai, “Liberty, Equality, Homosexuality: Discourses on Sexuality and Transculturality of Anarchism in China between 1910 and 1930”
- Dong Shao, “The Confession of ‘Self-cleansing’: The Translation Strategies of Liu Ban-nong during the Literary Revolution of 1917”

Cultural exchanges and translations, for early 20th-century Chinese intellectuals, became a promising enterprise to rethink and reform their society. Concerning the formation of modern China, recent research continues to investigate the international relations of China. Scholars not only contextualise modern Chinese culture in the ever-changing world but also emphasise Chinese intellectuals’ subjectivity against their historical backgrounds and societal structures. In this spirit, drawing upon extensive research resources from Japan, Germany, America, Russia, among others, this panel explores cultural exchanges and translations from various dimensions, including cosmopolitanism, counter-enlightenment thoughts, anarchism, and homosexuality, as well as the role of modern Chinese intellectuals. The first paper, by LO Man-chi, examines an interrelationship of Tian Han, Uchiyama Kanzō and Shanghai with newly excavated materials, in which an East Asian cosmopolitanism had flourished in the 1920s. Then YAU Ting-kit Kevin discusses how Cai Yuan-pei, through purposeful translations from Japanese and German in 1900-17, brought Counter-Enlightenment Movements to China. Following this is TSAI Meng-che’s paper, which traces the discourses of homosexuality in 1910-30. Tsai analyses how Ba-Jin and Jian-Bo introduced Emma Goldman’s articles from the United States and raised sexuality issues from a perspective of anarchism. Finally, SHAO Dong draws attention to the translation strategies “self-cleansing” proposed by Liu Ban-nong in 1917, showing the tension Liu experienced from a Shanghai journalist-literati to a Beijing literary intellectual and reviewing the issue of paradigm transition with Pierre Bourdieu’s ‘field and habitus’ framework.

Ting-Kit Kevin Yau, “Translating Counter-Enlightenment into China: The Translations by Cai Yuan-pei in 1900–1917”

Inspired by Peng Hsiao-yen’s latest academic work *Dialectics between Affect and Reason: The May-fourth Counter-Enlightenment* (2019), the paper contributes in revealing the intention of Cai Yuan-pei in his translations between 1900 to 1917. In this period, he translated various thoughts from Japan to Germany, including *Essentials of Philosophy* by Russian-German philosopher Raphael von Koeber (1848–1923), *Lectures on Mystery Studies* by the Japanese “Doctor Specter” Inoue Enryō (1858–1919) and *Principles of Ethics* by German Neo-Kantian philosopher Friedrich Paulsen (1846–1908). Under the



reorganisation of the thoughts in these works, the paper suggests that the dialectics between Affect and Reason, one of the essentials in western enlightenment and counter-enlightenment movement, came into Cai's vision and participated in the development of Chinese modern culture. By tracing the above works, the presentation also contextualises the formation of Cai's idea of "Replacing Religion by Aesthetic Education".

Man-Chi Lo, "The Cultural Exchange between China and Japan in the 1920s' Shanghai—Centering the Relationship of Tian Han and Uchiyama Kanzō"

Throughout modern history, China had frequent cultural exchanges with its immediate neighbour Japan. Previous studies either focused on the impact of Japanese literature on Chinese literature, or on the sojourn of Chinese students studying in Japan, but less attention has been paid to the history of the real cultural exchanges between the two countries taken place in China. This paper focuses on the interrelationship of Tian Han (1898–1968), Uchiyama Kanzō (1885–1959) and Shanghai, as three of them all played the important role of cultural intermediary and embodied the spirit of cosmopolitanism in the East Asia in the 1920s. Tian Han is renowned as the lyricist of the national anthem of the PRC and the founder of modern Chinese drama, while Uchiyama Kanzō is renowned as the closest Japanese friend of Lu Xun. However, their important role in Sino-Nippon cultural exchange and close relationship has been rarely discussed. Apart from the literary works, the discussion of this paper is also supported by newly excavated first-hand historical materials such as diaries, newspapers, and photographs, which have also been relatively neglected in the current study of modern Chinese literature. Not only does this paper supplement important biographical information of Tian Han and Uchiyama Kanzō, but it also opens a new discussion on their cultural contribution, as well as provides a re-understanding of the literary scene and cultural milieu of Shanghai in the 1920s.

Meng-Che Tsai, "Liberty, Equality, Homosexuality: Discourses on Sexuality and Transculturality of Anarchism in China between 1910 and 1930"

Anarchism, one of the modernisation agendas for state transformation and social reorganisation, was introduced by intellectuals in the early twentieth century when China underwent transformation. Intellectuals such as Ba-Jin(1904–2005) and Jian-Bo(1904–1991) translated works on anarchism from Europe, Japan, and Russia. Among these anarchist thoughts, the works of Emma Goldman(1869–1940) were particularly influential. Based on anarchism, they proposed a new imaginary of future: an utopia that eradicates governmental organisations and emphasises individual liberation as well as equality. Beyond the political arenas, they foregrounded the importance of cultural reform and advocated for women and sexual emancipation by criticising the system of private property and power oppression. Their discursive practices and new lifestyle experiments responded to the traditions of intimacy, marriage, and family. By tracing discourses of homosexuality, this article examines how Jian-Bo and other anarchists re-conceptualised gender and sexuality based on the anarchist understanding of freedom and equality.

Dong Shao, "The Confession of 'Self-cleansing': The Translation Strategies of Liu Ban-nong during the Literary Revolution of 1917"

Liu Ban-nong(1891–1934), known as a radical New Literature initiator during the literary revolution of 1917, started his literary career as a popular writer contributing to commercial journals published in Shanghai in the early 1910s. He was a writer with some repute for leisure stories and the translation of Sherlock Holmes until 1916. Once he was invited to be the editor and writer of New Youth in Beijing in the middle of 1917, a tremendous transformation had taken place in his self-identity. In the progress which he called was 'Self-cleansing', he severed the ties with the Shanghai scene and criticised the

literary style he had just discarded. Given New Literature writers are often seen as a community with solid enlightenment background and radical political position, the case of Liu Ban-nong stood as a unique one for his transition from a Shanghai journalist-literati into a Beijing literary intellectual, which revealed the tension between two competing literary styles. In the progress of the Literary Revolution, like the readers of New Youth, Liu himself underwent great changes and enlightenment by his peers. The translation strategies of him served as one perfect example of his 'Self-cleansing'. By comparison between his translation works from different periods, this paper intended to illustrate the effacement and reenactment of strategies and agency of his previous Shanghai styles. The paper also situated the paradigm transition on the "Field and habitus"—an analytic framework proposed by Pierre Bourdieu to understand his pursuits of a modern intellectual.

Papers on Modern Literature I

Contemporary I

Tuesday

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

Room E

- Chaired by Federica Gamberini
- Keru Cai, "Poverty and Squalor in Modern Chinese Realism"
- Pei-yin Lin, Kaibin Ouyang, "Mu Xin as Icarus-Artist and His Romantic *Bildung* and Its Implications"
- Sasha Hsiang-Yin Chen, "Honour and Power in Poetic Language and Ideology. Translation Studies and Transcultural Analyses of Russian-Soviet, Taiwanese, and Chinese Rock Music"
- Daria Berg, Giorgio Strafella, "China's New Media Superstars"

Keru Cai, "Poverty and Squalor in Modern Chinese Realism"

How do early 20th-century Chinese intellectuals sift through centuries of Western and Chinese literary history and compact them into new genres during a few decades of heady experimentation? I argue that modern Chinese realist writers frequently turned to the topic of material poverty—starving peasants, urban labourers, homeless orphans—to convey their sense of textual poverty and national backwardness. At odds with a literary and linguistic tradition that for thousands of years had been largely the purview of the scholar-official class, the radically new topic of poverty in fact enriched the nascent forms of Chinese fiction: by depicting poverty, writers innovated strategies of representing the nation, the social other, and time and space, while problematizing the ethical implications of deploying this weighty topic for aesthetic purposes. Though it was contact with Western cultures that produced their sense of backwardness, Chinese writers discovered within those foreign literary traditions—particularly Russian realism—the narrative tools to remedy China's purported textual deficiency by writing about poverty. I examine why Russian literature, itself long preoccupied with a problem of belatedness vis à vis Western Europe, occupied a privileged place for Chinese intellectuals of this era. Comparing fiction about poverty by Lu Xun, Xiao Hong, Yu Dafu, Jiang Guangci, and lesser-known writers, to their Russian intertexts by Gogol, Andreev, Turgenev, and others, I show how Chinese writers drew and innovated upon themes (such as madness or human animality) and formal elements (such as metonymy or free indirect discourse) to invent a new, syncretic realism.



Pei-yin Lin, Kaibin Ouyang, “Mu Xin as Icarus-Artist and His Romantic Bildung and Its Implications”

Mu Xin (1927–2011) is an important yet understudied Chinese writer, poet and artist who grew up with the May Fourth inspirations, survived the Cultural Revolution, and rose to fame in 1980s Taiwan during his sojourn in New York. His work sparked what was called “Mu Xin fever” in 1980s Taiwan and Chinese mainland in this century. Appraisals of his writing to date, however, tend to lack historical analysis and cultural perspective. This paper argues that Mu Xin is highly relevant to modern Chinese culture and history, and to modernity at large, and this can be best illuminated through the angle of cross-cultural romantic subjectivity. Based on Literary Memoirs, Mu Xin’s lectures on world literature, this paper traces Mu Xin’s self-identity as “Icarus artist,” an archetype linking the 19th century European and modern Chinese Romanticism. It points out that the essence of Mu Xin’s romantic self-fashioning—the ideal of self-education, realisation and perfection through art—bears great affinity with the German tradition of *Bildung*, especially that in early German romanticism. It then discusses that Mu Xin’s early *Bildung* benefitted immensely from Republican China’s “aesthetic education,” and how he relied on his *Bildung* to survive the Cultural Revolution. It concludes that Mu Xin provides a fascinating case to revisit modern Chinese romanticism from a cross-cultural and post-revolutionary perspective. His *Bildung* under Mao’s totalitarianism not only miraculously extends modern Chinese romantic individualism, but also manifests his own unique Icarian image—a Nietzschean superman with Laozi’s wisdom and Wei-Jin aesthetics (魏晉風度).

Sasha Hsiang-Yin Chen, “Honour and Power in Poetic Language and Ideology. Translation Studies and Transcultural Analyses of Russian-Soviet, Taiwanese, and Chinese Rock Music”

This proposal studies the poetic language and ideology of rock music, showing the literary, musical and socio-political connections between rock musicians and their works in the Soviet Union, Taiwan and mainland China after the open policies in the 1980s. In conference presentation, I would target the three significant figures in the above-mentioned three areas, with specific reference to the songs of Boris Grebenshchikov, Xue Yue and Cui Jian, to show their ideological similarities and cultural differences under communism, socialism or collectivism and to demonstrate transcultural movements in the face of rising capitalism and commercialism. Providing such comparative and transcultural analysis of the contemporary texts of their songs in the 1980s enables a re-reading and scrutiny of the place of rock music in Russian-Soviet, Taiwanese and Chinese cultures and their relationship between musicians and their fans under the social transitions.

Daria Berg, Giorgio Strafella, “China’s New Media Superstars”

The paper aims to analyse the rise of authors, artists and cultural entrepreneurs (*wenhua qiyejia*) as China’s new media superstars. This study analyses changes in popular culture, gender roles and social dynamics in a globalising post-socialist China (1997–present). It examines how cultural entrepreneurs—including Anni Baobei, Xu Jinglei, Han Han, Guo Jingming, and Cao Fei—invent themselves as ‘consumption celebrities’ (Guy Debord, 1992) whose multi-media personae epitomise the many facets of China’s new culture of consumption. China’s Internet population reached 854 million in 2019 with a 61% penetration rate (CNNIC 2019). The digital media offer platforms for a new vernacular culture and competing discourses. This study analyses first, how China’s new stars fashion themselves as a new type of celebrity; and second, how their works create a media spectacle. This media spectacle exists on three levels: first, as the public spectacle of male and female self-fashioning, casting the new media celebrity; second, as literary or artistic reflections on China’s globalisation and rise to superpower status; and third, as the epitome of the rise of women as China’s new cultural entrepreneurs. This paper aims to contribute to our understanding of celebrity culture, the tensions between official and unofficial

discourses, China's vernacular and officially ordained cultures, and also the rise of women as cultural entrepreneurs in China's mediasphere. This research will shed new light on China's new media superstars and changing cultural dynamics in the era of globalisation. This paper is jointly authored by Daria Berg and Giorgio Strafella.
