

Call for Papers

Modernist Memories: 1922, Before and After

Institute of English and American Studies and the Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform
Goethe University Frankfurt
23–25 May 2022

Keynote Speakers

John Brannigan (University College Dublin)

Astrid Erll (Goethe University Frankfurt)

Jean-Michel Rabaté (University of Pennsylvania)

Occurring within a critical and cultural climate of commemoration in academia and beyond, the 1922 modernist centenary gives rise to a range of questions concerning the interfaces between modernism and ideas of cultural memory: namely, how do we conceive the relationship between the moment of ‘high’ modernism and the emergence of collective memory studies in the 1920s? How has modernism figured and travelled in artistic practice and critical discourses over the past century? Has modernism become a cultural memory that has been produced through commemoration, commodification and institutionalisation?

The *annus mirabilis* of literary modernism is chiefly synonymous with the conceptualisation, continuation or completion of a host of artworks which took anamnesis and memory as core and complex topics and thematics: T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Franz Kafka’s *Das Schloss*, Katherine Mansfield’s *The Garden Party*, Marcel Proust’s *À la recherche du temps perdu*, Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Duineser Elegien* and Virginia Woolf’s *Jacob’s Room*; as well as important philosophical and theoretical works such as Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Viktor Shlovsky’s elaboration of ‘defamiliarisation’ towards a theory of prose, Sigmund Freud’s *The Ego and the Id*, and Henri Bergson’s *Duration and Simultaneity*. Concurrently, cultural memory studies has its foundations during this modernist moment: Walter Benjamin publishes ‘Erfahrung und Armut’, Maurice Halbwachs writes *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*; Aby Warburg prepares his *Mnemonsyne* exhibition; Karl Mannheim develops his *Ideologie und Utopie*; and Friedrich Bartlett works towards his conceptualisation of memory schema. As it marks an overlap in the development of these related cultural and theoretical initiatives, the 1922 modernist centenary constitutes an ideal occasion to conceptualise, and take full stock of, the relation and significance of ‘high’ modernism to cultural memory studies, and vice versa.

Similarly, the memory of 1922 from our 2022 vantage point invites us to consider the afterlives, legacies and lineages of modernist production in contemporary art and critical discourses as an archive compelling the scrutiny of cultural memory studies. Meditating on

the transmission and reception histories of modernist texts and ideas, we may ask: how have such literatures been adapted, translated and remediated across cultures, space and time? Where have modernist concepts, forms and styles travelled one hundred years hence? And how have modernism and 1922 continued to inform understandings of the relationship between history, literature and tradition?

Moreover, the broadscale commodification, institutionalisation and teaching of modernism across the globe today prompts related questions concerning modernism as a cultural memory: what does 1922 mean today after a century of globalisation, as well as the ongoing geographical and temporal expansion of the modernist canon? What do 1922 and modernism accomplish or occlude as proleptic narrative threads that take a century into their remit and furnish its description with specific forms of thinking? And can modernism, as a mode of narration and a structure of memory, encompass artworks which 'make it new' from different centuries?

The Institute of English and American Studies and the Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform (<https://www.memorystudies-frankfurt.com>) is organising an International Conference on *Modernist Memories: 1922, Before and After* to be held at Goethe University Frankfurt from the 23rd to the 25th of May 2022. This conference seeks contributions addressing these aspects of the relationships between modernist studies and memory studies. As we mean to foster dialogue and debate on this focused topic, we welcome the submission of abstracts for papers (15–20 minutes in length), themed panels (maximum 3 speakers) and roundtable discussions.

Topics for presentation and discussion include but are not limited to:

Modernism and Memory

- 'high' modernism as the legacy and/or time of collective memory studies
- modernist forms and the forms of cultural memory
- the relationship between modernist language, memory and history

Modernist Afterlives

- modernist afterlives, receptions, remediations and rewrites
- the (un)conscious traces of the modernist past in contemporary literatures and arts
- travelling concepts, forms and styles

Remembering Modernism

- modernism as a cultural memory
- the commemoration, commodification and institutionalisation of modernism
- modernism as a critically inclusive or colonising term which incorporates or occludes other modes of expression across cultures, time and space

Abstracts

If you wish to propose a paper, panel or a roundtable tracing this cultural, literary and theoretical dialogue, please submit a 250-word abstract with a short biographical note to John Greaney at modernistmemories@gmail.com by **11 February 2022**. Participation is limited to 50 delegates max. The conference will be an in-person event unless circumstances change. Registration fee for participants: €30 waged/ €15 students, unwaged.