

IABA Asia-Pacific International Conference 2019

“Life Writing and Asia-Pacific Cultures”

Cultures and cultural change affect life writing and life writing gives impetus to cultural development. Global cultures have undergone fundamental changes in the 21st Century and the Asia-Pacific region has attracted particular attention from the international community—particularly in relation to human migration and displacement, economic and technological growth, sustainability and the environment, and a host of other transforming events. Life writing has responded to these cultural developments with many different types of life narratives emerging across forms, genres and themes. To achieve a better understanding of these culturally topical life narrative texts and themes in the Asia-Pacific region, the Center for Life Writing of Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU) will host “Life Writing and Asia-Pacific Cultures,” the International Auto/Biography Association Asia-Pacific Region conference from Oct. 25 to 27, 2019. This conference will offer plenary sessions on the following topics and feature six experts who will give keynote speeches:

Confucian Culture and Life Writing

With a long history and vast area of influence in Asia, Confucian culture’s emphasis on the importance of character development and achievements has exerted a profound influence on the emergence and evolution of Asia-Pacific life writing traditions. The plenary will discuss how Confucianism shapes the representation of the biographical subject’s character, and how life writing genres have responded into modern times.

Migration, Displacement, and Asylum Seeking

These global concerns have always been crucial in the Asia-Pacific region, and for the life writing that has emerged within it. As perennial components of Asia-Pacific life writing, such mobilities impact our understanding of family and memories, immigration and settlement, and individuals’ and communities’ struggles, successes, and failures to succeed.

Cultural Hybrids and Life Writing

The many historical and geographic overlays experienced by Asia-Pacific cultures often result in multiple and uncertain cultural identities. Life writing often documents the tensions, conflicts, and achievements resulting from such cultural interchange.

Local Cultures and Life Writing

The Asia-Pacific Region boasts rich and complex local cultures that have developed ways for sustaining their own identities and integrity, often in the face of extreme external pressures and even actual interventions. Life writing's contributions to defining and preserving such local cultures will be the subject of discussion.

Other Issues in Life Writing Associated with Asia-Pacific Cultures

Further information about the plenary related to these issues will be forthcoming; this general area creates further possibilities for discussing other significant aspects of Asian-Pacific cultures and life writing.

We welcome papers that broadly consider aspects of life narrative in this region. Possible themes include:

- Life narrative texts from or about the Asia-Pacific region
- Confucian Culture and Life Writing
- Life Writing of migration, displacement, and asylum seeking
- Regional life writing and local cultures
- Creative/life writing in the Asia-Pacific
- Hybrid cultures and life writing
- Life writing and digital media; social media
- Archives, history, and memory
- Family and personal histories
- Methods for working with life narrative
- Life writing and the politics of language and translation
- Affect and the representation of emotions in life narratives

Attendees will register on our website: <http://www.sclw.sjtu.edu.cn/IABA2019>. Scholars planning to give speeches at the conference need to submit abstracts on line before Apr. 30, 2019. Formal invitations will be dispatched afterwards according to online registrations and submitted abstracts. Travel and accommodation costs associated with this conference will be covered by attendees. As for conference fees, attendees who register before Jun. 30, 2019, will enjoy an early bird discount of 180 US dollars or 1000 RMB; after Jun. 30, 2019, the fees will be 200 US dollars or 1200 RMB. There will be a half discount for student participants.

Deadlines and Conference Schedule:

Deadline for Abstracts (about 300 words): Apr. 30, 2019

Notification of Acceptance: May. 30, 2019

Deadline for Registration: Sep. 30, 2019

Conference Dates: Oct. 25-27, 2019.

The working languages for this conference are Chinese and English; paper abstracts can be written in either language. We will provide translation service between the two languages. Papers will be considered for publication in our journal, *Journal of Modern Life Writing Studies*.

IABA Asia-Pacific

Center for Life Writing, SJTU

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