

AN OVERVIEW OF

# NEW MODERNISM



## WHAT IS IT?

New Modernism is a movement to advance modernism studies into new directions and methodologies. Commonly defined through the word "expansion" New Modernism attempts to broaden the scope of which authors and works are considered a part of the modernism cannon (Mao & Walkowitz).

## THE THREE STRANDS

Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz identify three key strands of expansion within modernism: temporal, spatial, and vertical (Mao and Walkowitz 737 & 738).



## TEMPORAL

Temporal expansion of modernism seeks to expand past the stereotypical time period (usually defined from the early 1900's to the 1940's). Some scholars argue that this rigid adherence to the previously accepted time period ignores many author's outside of the Western Canon while expanding the time period accepted as modernism moves modernism to a more global literary movement (Mao and Walkowitz 738).

## SPATIAL

Another shift in methodology is the move towards a more global or transnational definition of modernism. However, it is more than just including authors from outside the Western World this spatial expansions works to "...globalize modernism both by identifying new local strains in parts of the world not always associated with modernist production and by situating well-known modernist artifacts in a broader transnational past" (Mao and Walkowitz 739).



## VERTICAL

New Modernism also attempts to expand modernism past the idea "high art" into other areas such as pop culture. This broadens the field in critical ways as more often than not modernism has been seen as Mao and Walkowitz put it: "by and for a certain kind of high...as against a certain kind of low..." (738).

## IMPACT ON NATIVE AMERICAN AUTHORS AND LITERARY STUDIES

While "New Modernism" would seem to open the cannon and therefore diversify it, Kirby Brown argues that New Modernist Studies has what he deems "an Indian problem" (289). He argues that even major scholars in new modernist studies do not include Native authors. Kirby argues that Native literatures are the direction that New Modernist studies need to go in.



## WORKS CITED

KIRBY BROWN. "AMERICAN INDIAN MODERNITIES AND NEW MODERNIST STUDIES: 'INDIAN PROBLEM.'" TEXAS STUDIES IN LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE, VOL. 59, NO. 3, 2017, PP. 287-318

DOUGLAS MAO, AND REBECCA L. WALKOWITZ. "THE NEW MODERNIST STUDIES." PMLA : PUBLICATIONS OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, VOL. 123, NO. 3, 2008, PP. 737-748.