

Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies

Vol. 46 No. 2 | September 2020

Call for Papers

The Ethical Turn Revisited

Guest editor

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Deadline for Submissions: August 30, 2019

In the preface for a 1999 *PMLA* special issue on “Ethics and Literary Study,” Lawrence Buell commented on the ethical turn as the “paradigm-defining concept” of the 1990s. Thirty years later, we have witnessed a revival of interest in ethical criticism, in particular among a group of Chinese scholars led by Nie Zhenzhao of Zhejiang University. It is important to note that the Chinese turn to ethics has evolved in a specific historical context of post-revolution China. Against the background of the post-1976 import of western theories to China, Nie advocates critical ethical engagements in both literature and theory. In “Toward an Ethical Literary Criticism,” Nie argues that “the primary purpose of literature is not to provide entertainment but to offer moral examples for human beings to follow, to enrich their material and spiritual life with moral guidance, and to achieve their self-perfection with moral experience.” Nie’s theory is perhaps closest to positions advocated by Martha Nussbaum and Richard Rorty, who turn to literature “as a supplement of moral philosophy” (Buell 8). With Nussbaum and Rorty, Nie affirms that “one of the most important ingredients in moral progress is the cultivation of the imagination” (“On Moral Progress: A Response to Richard Rorty” 959). Nie looks to the micro-logic of the literary-ethical relationship to develop a system to “unpack the ethical features of literary works.” The International Association of Ethical Literary Criticism (IAELC), founded by Nie in 2012, has sponsored symposiums in countries such as China, England, Estonia, Japan, and Korea. In this special issue of *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies*, we invite submissions that revisit the ethical turn through the lens of literary criticism and related critical perspectives, with a particular emphasis on literature and criticism emerging from the Asia-Pacific region.

Please send complete papers of 6,000-10,000 words, 5-8 keywords, and a brief biography to concentric.lit@deps.ntnu.edu.tw by August 30, 2019. Manuscripts should follow the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Except for

footnotes, which should be single-spaced, manuscripts must be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman. Please consult our style guide at <http://www.concentric-literature.url.tw/submissions.php>.

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For submissions or general inquiries, please contact us at:
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