Exile Literature

Block Seminar

Instructors, Pavan Malreddy and Abiral Kumar   
  
The twentieth century is marked by movements of people through displacement, emigration, and forced (re)settlements. The rise and fall of socialism, colonialism, dictatorial regimes, and the geopolitics of the Cold War era have led many individuals, ethnic groups, and marginalized communities to leave their homelands for stranger shores. Although much of the exile literature today is appropriated by postcolonial studies, the movement of people is not exclusively a colonial phenomenon. Socialism (Russia, China), Cold War led expansionism (Vietnam, Congo, Cuba), internal colonialism (Scotland, Ireland), and even the post-9/11 War on Terror (Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria) have played an instrumental role in the production of exile experience (and literature). This seminar pays special attention to the political backdrop of the literary production on exile, while carefully distinguishing it from diaspora, immigration and/or economic migration. The seminar also reflect on contemporary preoccupation with forms of cosmopolitanisms on the one hand, and the anti-migration policies being implemented by the major global powers under the usual slogans of “Make X Great Again”. The seminar will move through the experience of exile, its political implications, while also taking critical stock of the labour of the migrant, the refugee, and the exile that go into the urban and intellectual infrastructures of the cosmopolitan centers of the world as markers of global capitalism and Neo-imperial frameworks.

Session 1: Introductory Meeting

20.10.25, 13 Hours (zoom): https://uni-potsdam.zoom-x.de/j/5755118469

Meeting ID: 575 511 8469 Passcode: 14631458

Reading 1: Edward Said: “Between Worlds”

*Each session from session 2 requires a moderation, in groups: students are expected to offer a conceptual exposition of the reading/poem/novel/secondary text assigned for that session.*

Session 2: 10.01.26, 10-11-30 hrs.

Exile in Versie (poems will be uploaded online)

“Home”: Warsan Shire;

“99 Names of Exile”: Kaveh Bassiri;

Session 3: 10.01.26 11:30-13:00 hrs.

Exile in Verse (poems will be uploaded online)

“Like a Dog”: Jusuf Naoum;   
“Waiting for the Barbarians”: C.P Cavafy   
  
Session 4: 10.01.26 14:30-16:00 hrs.

Theorizing Exile

Said: “Reflections on Exile”

[CM Mardorossian](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=WftyNxUAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra): From exile to migrant literature

Session 5: 11.01.26, 10-11:30 hrs.

Theorizing exile

Viet Thanh Nguyen: Introduction from The Displaced, short story collection

Goyal: Exile, Migrants and Refugees  
  
Session 6: 11.01.26, 11:30-13 hrs.

Rushdie S. Knife: Meditations after an attempted murder. Penguin Random House. 2024.

Session 7: 11.01.26, 14-16hrs.

Rushdie S. Knife: Meditations after an attempted murder. Penguin Random House. 2024.

(this session will be dedicated to the popular discourse around the book and attempted murder)

Session 8: 17.01.26, 10-11:30 hrs.

N Naghibi: [Migration, exile, and diaspora in graphic life narratives](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08989575.2020.1738081)

[MD Boatright](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=wOp17xMAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra) : [Graphic journeys: Graphic novels' representations of immigrant experiences](https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1598/JAAL.53.6.3?casa_token=czlWtxw9F3MAAAAA:wvi_Z2sl2Fh8bh8qKzqcPiUwsHKvMr822qfq4LdPmqx0Uy8Jhdjlh-rKqtHkm-pGDwD2KHwcWtutt5P1)

Session 9: 17.01.26, 1:30-13hrs.

Graphic Novel: The Arrival [Text will be uploaded on Moodle]

Session 10: 17.01.26, 14-16 hrs.

Graphic Novel: The Arrival

Session 11 & 12

18.01.26, 10-13 hours

Film screening and discussion: *The Namesake* (2006)

Session 13 & 14

18.01.26, 14-16 hours

Selection of Stories from Viet Thanh Nguyen The Displaced (2018)

**Requirements:**

In order to pass this seminar, students will be expected to hand in a mandatory midterm assignment. Details will be announced in the first session.

3 ECTS: 1500 words (should be presented as a written summary of **session moderation**) + midterm assignment

6 ECTS: 6000 words (and a summary of **session moderation**) + midterm assignment

**Session moderation**: all students are required to **moderate a session** (in groups of three maximum) with the following tasks: present the central argument of the reading/s assigned for that session with a critical and reflective perspective. At least one of the session leads is expected to bridge the session, i.e. summarize the discussion from the previous session and present it (5 minutes maximum) at the opening of the class. *Each student prepares and sends 1500 words of summary of their part in session leading to me by email one day before their session.*

Signing up for session moderation is only possible on the Moodle. The relevant option will be activated after the first session.