

Course title:	Flucht und Exil. Migrationsbewegungen in der Literatur des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts
Instructor:	Dr. Anja Richter
Email address:	anja.richter@fu-berlin.de
Track:	B-Track
Language of instruction:	German
Prerequisites:	Students should be able to speak and read German at the upper intermediate level (B2)/advanced level (C1) or higher.
Contact hours:	48 (6 per day)
ECTS-Credits:	5

Course description

The recurring theme of the literary works analyzed in this course is the individual experience during pivotal moments in history. There exist numerous factors compelling individuals to leave their home countries. According to the United Nations, the global number of individuals escaping persecution and violent conflicts has reached unprecedented levels. This surge in displacement began with the onset of the Syrian civil war in 2011 and escalated further with the Russian attack on Ukraine in 2022, leading to a significant increase in refugees within Germany.

Given Germany's historical context, it is needless to say that the country bears a distinct responsibility regarding issues of exile and migration. In 1933, the rise of the National Socialists to power compelled many individuals whose lives were under threat to seek refuge in other European and American countries. This was the case for numerous writers whose subsequent works not only chronicled the challenges of residing in foreign lands but also showcased the authors' capacity for critical reflection on the political and social realities of their homeland.

Following the end of World War II, a different migration pattern emerged, with people now migrating to Germany rather than leaving it. This was exemplified by the waves of migration in the 1950s and 1970s, driven by the economic boom in West Germany (the term *Gastarbeiter*/guestworker, emerged during this period). With the fall of the Iron Curtain in the 1980s and 1990s, a significant number of individuals from the former Eastern Bloc States immigrated to the former Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Some of these newcomers used art and literature to express their experiences and address issues like the loss of language, culture, and identity.

However, international events were not the sole reason for people leaving their *Heimat*. Between the 1970s until the fall of the Wall, a domestic exodus occurred within Germany due to the forced expulsions of dissident citizens from the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The profound disruptions in people's lives resonate in the works of authors who opposed the system.

The course's readings will be enhanced with discussions, film clips and field trips to significant location such as the Topography of Terror Documentation Centre, the Stasi Museum (on the grounds of the former headquarters of the GDR Ministry for State Security) and a museum for migration history (FHXB Kreuzberg). These activities will allow us to follow the paths of various migratory patterns, fostering awareness of this pressing issue in contexts of the past, present and future.

Students will practice analyzing and comparing literary texts and examine how historical developments affect the individual's personality, creativity, and artistic freedom. At the same time, they expand and improve their oral and written language skills through their own text production and discussion.

Student Profile

Aside from the language requirements, participants are not required to have any advanced knowledge of German literature or history. The seminar was designed for students of different disciplines interested in German literature and its historical contexts.

Course requirements

See Grading.

Required language skills

The language of instruction is German. Language proficiency on an advanced intermediate level (B2) / advanced level (C1) is a prerequisite for participation. For orientation purposes, you can assess your language skills here (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>.

Grading

35% regular and active participation. Due to the seminar format, regular participation in the discussions is expected.

30% an oral presentation (approx. 15 minutes). The oral presentation should provide initial insight into the text in question, ask questions and formulate arguments, and stimulate discussion. The subjects will be assigned during the first week.

35% a seminar paper of 6 pages.

Readings

Reader (will be made available online).

Please note: We will read excerpts from the writings, novels, and essays listed in this syllabus.

Course Schedule

Date	Program*
<p>Tuesday, July 23, 2024</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>National Socialism (1933-1945) I: Exile in Europe and the USA</p> <p>After Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, numerous intellectuals left Germany. Among them, the political theorist and publicist <i>Hannah Arendt</i> (1906-1975) left for Paris in 1933 following a brief period of imprisonment by the Secret State Police (Gestapo). In 1941, she managed to escape to New York via Lissabon.</p> <p>The poet <i>Else Lasker-Schüler</i> (1869-1945) first emigrated to Zurich. In 1938 she was stripped of her German citizenship, and Switzerland refused her a new visa. Impoverished, disappointed and discouraged, she spent the last years of her life in Israel.</p> <p>The philosopher <i>Walter Benjamin</i> (1892-1940) also sought refuge in Paris in 1933. In 1940 he obtained a visa for the USA with the intention of leaving Europe via Portugal. However, while in the Spanish town of Portbou, he tragically committed suicide in a moment of resignation, as he was still threatened of extradition to the Germans.</p> <p><u>Our research question:</u> How did the above-mentioned intellectuals experience their flight and exile, and how did they cope with adversity, hopelessness, and resignation?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Else Lasker-Schüler: "Mein blaues Klavier" („<i>My blue piano</i>“, Poem, 1943) - Hannah Arendt: "Wir Flüchtlinge" („<i>We refugees</i>“, Essay, 1943, German version 1986) - Walter Benjamin: „Über den Begriff der Geschichte“ ("<i>Theses on the Philosophy of History</i>" Philosophical theses, 1940)
<p>Friday, July 26, 2024</p>	<p>National Socialism (1933-1945) II: Exile in Europe and the USA</p> <p><i>Bertolt Brecht</i> (1898-1956) fled through Prague and Vienna to Switzerland, and then to Denmark. Following the German troop invasion in Denmark, he traveled to Finland and later, in 1941, to the USA. Despite his literary success, he remained an outsider in precarious financial conditions throughout his exile, struggling to fully integrate into American culture.</p> <p><i>Thomas Mann</i> (1875-1955), who received the Nobel Prize in 1929, emigrated in 1933 in Küsnacht bei Zürich, in Switzerland. In 1938, the Mann family immigrated to California where they enjoyed a comfortable life thanks to his successes.</p> <p>The poet <i>Nelly Sachs</i> (1891 - 1970), like all Jewish citizens, was threatened with deportation to a concentration camp after the consolidation of the Nazi regime; she had already received the</p>

	<p>deportation order. At the last moment, however, she managed to obtain exit papers for herself and her mother; in 1940, she went to Sweden.</p> <p>The philosopher, sociologist and music theorist <i>Theodor W. Adorno</i> (1903 -1969) emigrated to the USA and continued his academic work in New York. In 1949 he returned to Germany and, together with Max Horkheimer, directed the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt am Main.</p> <p><u>Our research questions:</u> How did American democracy influence the exiles' view of the dictatorial regime in their homeland? And how did the crisis situation shape their own literary work and philosophical line of thought?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bertolt Brecht: „Zufluchtsstätte“ (poem, 1937), „Zum Freitod des Flüchtlings W. B.“ (poem, 1941) und „Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches“ (theater play, 1945) - Thomas Mann: „Deutsche Hörer“ (Radio speeches, 1942) - Nelly Sachs: „Ihr Zuschauenden“ (poem, 1944/45) und „Chor der Geretteten“ (poem, 1946) - Theodor W. Adorno: <i>Minima Moralia. Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben</i> (Aphorisms and essays, 1951) <p><i>Field Trip:</i> Topography of Terror Documentation Centre</p>
<p>Tuesday, July 30, 2024</p>	<p>Inner-German Exile I: Expatriations from the German Democratic Republic (GDR)</p> <p><i>Peter Huchel</i> (1903-1981), a poet and editor, faced a publishing ban in the GDR. Starting in 1968, he was subjected to constant surveillance by the Secret State Security (Stasi) and eventually sought to leave the GDR. However, his departure was only permitted after West Germany intervened. In 1971, he relocated to Staufen near Freiburg.</p> <p>The author <i>Reiner Kunze</i> (born in 1933) was expelled from the GDR's writers' association in 1976 for a work criticizing the regime, effectively barring him from practicing his profession. In 1977, he relocated to the FRG and has since resided near Passau.</p> <p>The singer-songwriter <i>Wolf Biermann</i> (born in 1936), who endured years of oppression under the GDR's authorities, faced expulsion from the country during a concert in Cologne, West Germany, in November 1976. This forced exile was seen as the catalyst for the GDR's decline, as it triggered a significant exodus of protesting artists.</p> <p><u>Our research questions:</u> Can artistic freedom find expression within a repressive state system? What kind of creativity emerges from the confrontation with censorship and regimentation?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peter Huchel: „Exil“ (Poem, 1965) and „Am Tag meines Fortgehens“ (Poem, 1972)

	<p>- Reiner Kunze: „Zuflucht noch hinter der Zuflucht. Für Peter Huchel“ (Poem, 1972), „Wolf Biermann singt“ (Poem, 1976) and „Die wunderbaren Jahre“ (Prose, 1976)</p> <p>- Wolf Biermann: „Ermutigung. Für Peter Huchel“ (Lyrics, 1968), „Selbstporträt für Reiner Kunze“ (Lyrics, 1972) und „Warte nicht auf bessere Zeiten“ (Lyrics, 1974)</p>
<p>Friday, August 2nd, 2024</p>	<p>Inner-German Exile II: Expatriations from the German Democratic Republic (GDR)</p> <p>Like many other authors, <i>Sarah Kirsch</i> (1935 - 2013) signed the protest resolution against Biermann's expatriation from the GDR, which resulted in her expulsion from the "Socialist Unity Party" (SED) and the Writers' Union. In 1977, she applied to leave the GDR and moved to the western part of the republic, where she explored the historical conditions through nature poetry.</p> <p>The writer <i>Jürgen Fuchs</i> (1950 - 1999), like many others, fought for political and literary freedom in the GDR. He spent nine months in Stasi custody before being expelled from the GDR. But even in the West, his political activities were monitored by the secret service and countered with disruptive measures.</p> <p><i>Bernd Wagner</i> (born 1948) requested to leave the country in 1985, following an attempt by the State Security (Stasi) to enlist him as an informant. In response, Wagner published an ironic letter addressed to Erich Mielke, the head of the Stasi, and the chairman of the GDR writers' association. He was subsequently deported to what was then West Berlin.</p> <p><u>Our research questions:</u> How did the expatriations affect literary productivity? Did the experiences of the GDR remain present, or did the themes and the intensity of the literary language change?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Kirsch: „Die Nacht streckt ihre Finger aus“ (Poem, 1974) and „Die Wiese“ (Poem, 1979) - Jürgen Fuchs: „Vernehmungsprotokolle: November 76 bis September 77“ (1978) - Bernd Wagner: „Die Wut im Koffer“ (Essays, 1991) <p><i>Field trip: Stasi Museum Berlin</i> (on the grounds of the former headquarters of the GDR Ministry for State Security)</p>
<p>Tuesday, August 6, 2024</p>	<p>The Federal Republic of Germany as a Country of Immigration I: Migration from Turkey and the Middle East in the 1950s to the 1970s</p> <p><i>Aras Ören</i> (born 1939) grew up in Istanbul, Turkey, and relocated to West Berlin in 1969. From 1974 onwards, he worked as a radio editor. Ören is known for his novels, short stories and poems, which address various themes, including the sense of alienation between German citizens and Turkish migrants.</p> <p><i>Rafik Schami</i> (born 1946) comes from Damascus in Syria. To escape censorship in his home country, he came to Germany, where</p>

	<p>he soon began writing in German and has since attempted to mediate between Orient and Occident.</p> <p><i>Ralf Rothmann</i>, born in northern Germany in 1953, was raised in the “Ruhrgebiet” region, to which many so-called “guest workers” settled in the 1960s. In his works, he portrays how the differences between Germans and foreigners gradually dissolved among the workers in the mining industry, bridging the gap between them and fostering a harmonious camaraderie.</p> <p><i>Zafer Şenocak</i> (b. 1961), who moved with his family from Turkey to Germany in 1970, writes poems, prose, and essays in which the relationship between Germans and their fellow citizens with a migration background is repositioned.</p> <p><u>Our research questions:</u> How are social tensions resulting from migration movements expressed? What opportunities does literature offer for constructively addressing cultural contrasts?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aras Ören: „Die Straßen von Kreuzberg“ (Poem, 1970) and „Plastikkoffer“ (Poem, 1980) - Rafik Schami: „Damaskus im Herzen und Deutschland im Blick“ (Stories, 2006) - Ralf Rothmann: “Milch und Kohle“ (Novel, 2000) - Zafer Şenocak: „Füße auf zwei Planeten“ (Poem, 1984) and „Zungenentfernung“ (Essays, 2001) <p>Film: Excerpts from „Almanya. Willkommen in Deutschland“ (Director: Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011)</p>
Friday, August 9, 2024	<p>The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) as a Country of Immigration I: Migration from Romania and the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s and 1990s</p> <p><i>Herta Müller</i> (born 1953) was raised in the Romanian Banat region, home to a German-speaking minority. In 1976, she was approached to engage in undercover work for the Romanian secret service Securitate, a request she declined. Müller emigrated to the Federal Republic in 1987. Through her works, she explores various themes, including the everyday hardships and horrors under the communist dictatorship.</p> <p><i>Saša Stanišić</i>, fled the Bosnian War in 1992 with his parents. They sought refuge in Heidelberg where he learned German. His writings are profoundly influenced by the repercussion of the war, especially coming to terms with one’s origin and creating a new sense of home through narration.</p> <p><u>Our research questions:</u> How are traumas of migration and expulsion, as well as the quest for one’s identity manifested in a foreign land? In what ways have mourning, melancholy, and the determination to start over shaped literary expression?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Herta Müller, „Reisende auf einem Bein“ (Story, 1989) and „Hunger und Seide“ (Essays, 2016) - Saša Stanišić: „Wie der Soldat das Grammophon repariert“ (Novel,

	<p>2006) and „Herkunft“ (Novel, 2019)</p> <p><i>Field Trip: Museum for Migration History (FHXB Kreuzberg)</i></p>
<p>Tuesday, August 13, 2024</p>	<p>Wars of the Present I: Refugees after the "Arab Spring" in Syria since 2011</p> <p><i>Mohammad Al Attar</i> was born in Damascus in 1980 and studied theater studies there and in London. In his plays, he addresses the emotional conflicts resulting from the Syrian revolution. He currently lives in Berlin.</p> <p>The journalist and poet <i>Khawla Dunia</i>, born in Damascus in 1968, writes about the situation of women in Syria and is a member of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights. After being arrested in October 2011 and imprisoned for six months, she fled first to Lebanon and then to Germany, where she now lives with her family.</p> <p><i>Rasha Abbas</i> (b. 1984) grew up in Damascus and joined the anti-government protest movement at the start of the Syrian war. She was forced into exile and now lives in Berlin. In her stories, she describes the terrifying reality of her homeland, her experiences as a refugee and the - often humorous - difficulties of learning German.</p> <p><u>Our research question:</u> How can torture, war, and the ever-present threat of death be put into words? How does one continue life far from home, but in the presence of memories? And also: What hopes and challenges are associated with exile in Germany?</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mohammad Al Attar: „Youssef war hier“ (Play, 2016) - Khawla Dunia: „Die Nacht und das Unmögliche“ (Poem, 2016) and „Eilmeldung“ (Poem, 2016) - Rasha Abbas: „Die Erfindung der deutschen Grammatik“ (Stories, 2016) <p>Film: excerpts from „Für Sama“ (Director: Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts, 2019)</p>
<p>Friday, August 16, 2024</p>	<p>Wars of the Present II: The "Floating Exile" after Russia's Invasion of Ukraine</p> <p>Ukraine's relative proximity to Germany and the possibility of crossing the border in both directions, despite the war, result in a kind of "floating exile" for some people: In her stories and essays, the Ukrainian writer <i>Tanya Maljartschuk</i> (*1983) deals with the difficult situation of living "between two stools". She lives in Vienna and observes and analyzes her personal state of mind in the face of the devastating effects of the Russian war of aggression on her homeland.</p> <p>Writer <i>Serhiy Zhadan</i>, born in 1974, continues to live in Ukraine despite the current war, but often goes on lecture tours to other countries, especially Germany, and has become an important activist</p>

of Ukrainian resistance to Russian aggression: In 2022, he received the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade.

Our research question: How is the hope of asserting one's own threatened culture against aggressive encroachment articulated? How effective is the literary form of resistance and what role do modern technologies play?

Readings:

-Tanja Maljartschuk: „Gleich geht die Geschichte weiter. Wir atmen nur“ (Essays, 2022) and „Hier ist immer Gewalt. Hier ist immer Kampf“ (Speech, 2023)

-Serhij Zhadan: „Himmel über Charkiw. Nachrichten vom Überleben im Krieg“ (Posts, 2022)

From 2 pm: FUBiS Farewell Event

* Field trips are subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, class hours may be adjusted