

IDH 3035 U09 Exilic Journeys: Literary Manifestations, Lessons and Legacies
Wednesday: 2:00-4:45; Classroom: Patricia & Philip Frost Museum 107

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Exilic Journeys will give students a nuanced understanding of how the unique status of exile, issues of displacement, complexities of cultural identity formation, the state of in-betweenness (liminality), and alienation shape fundamental human experiences. It explores the roots and causes of a given author's dislocation and examines its historical, social, cultural, psychological, political, and linguistic consequences.

Course Description:

Although exile is a human activity that extends back to ancient times, in the modern era of globalization it has become an increasingly common experience shared by a large number of people. Facilitated by technological advancements in transportation and necessitated by centuries of warfare, political oppression, natural disasters, and economic collapses, the countless occurrences of exile throughout history shaped not only individuals who left one culture to begin life anew in another, but also the societies they joined and the ones they left behind.

The legacy of exile is mixed. On the one hand, the sudden influx of foreign populations alters the communities into which exiles immigrate and often requires difficult adjustments for people living there. On the other hand, the infusion of people with new skills, perspectives, and dispositions can invigorate the receiving communities, even as the new environment these communities provide can offer markedly improved opportunities for personal growth and success for exiled individuals.

In the course of their studies, students will explore different definitions of exile, be it forced, voluntary or inner/internal, and learn how to differentiate between a variety of terms, refugee, expatriate, immigrant, among them, that are similarly associated with loss, nostalgia, pain, dispossession and dislocation. Class discussions will lead to an understanding of the tensions between a "purist" approach to exile as forceful/violent banishment from one's native land as a result of intolerance and that of exile as a metaphor for all kinds of alienation, societal estrangements and psychic dislocations. Given the nature and the demographic environment of Miami, the consequences of

studying the exilic condition are far-reaching. Not only will students be exposed to fine literary works, but they will also acquire a fresh perspective and awareness a culturally and demographically globalized city that is largely made up of transplants. The diversity of our community is natural, and it provides us with a great many opportunities to learn, in a profound and methodical way, how others think, feel, speak and live. In a city like Miami, we have no choice but be part of and inhabit the world of the “other.”

Students in this course will be exposed to creative works by both writers exiled from their homelands and native-born authors who made it their mission to bear direct witness to the inhumanity of the exilic condition and suggest ways to transcend what Joseph Conrad termed an “unnatural state of existence:” uprootedness, dislocation and dispossession. By reading the required texts students will explore the rancor and bitterness artists and their respective protagonists experience when exiled to the far reaches of the Gulag or the far-flung countries of the entire globe by capricious rulers of totalitarian regimes informed by the Machiavellian principle of ends justifying the means (Nabokov and Solzhenitsyn). By closely following the plight of a child separated from his family and the familiarity of a birthplace in *Night* students will be introduced to what can only be described as the ultimate manifestation of exile, the Holocaust (Wiesel). Students will also have a chance to examine the symbiotic relationship between exile and return, an ever-present motif in exile writings (De Aragon and Menendez). Given their ethnic and demographic diversity, as well as their ancestral origins, students who are descendants of immigrants and exiles will find it of major interest to explore literary responses to transgenerational transmission of trauma, filial responsibilities and the complexities of an inherited sense of exile (Kincaid and Menendez). The course will also pay close attention to writings that make use of the phenomenon of exile as a metaphor for ostracism through enacting discriminatory laws to stigmatize marginalized minorities (Malamud). In short, the class readings will help put a human face on the inhuman phenomenon of exile. Students will come to recognize that the literature of exile, as one of the most important forms of human activity, synthesizes and particularizes the rich and often traumatic experiences of transplantation and provides readers passage into the field of otherness. It “has often acted as a sort of deep bridge across geographical borders, cultural mentalities, and ideological divides.”

Course Objectives:

- To provide an analysis of the phenomenon of exile within an interdisciplinary academic context
- To examine a number of case studies with a respective literary text by a major exiled writer at its core

--To explore the roots and causes of a given author's displacement and examine its historical, social, cultural, psychological, political, and linguistic consequences
--To introduce students into the field of "otherness" through an in-depth study of the life and works of an exiled writer and to make them recognize the significance of diversified perspectives

Required Texts:

Short Stories

Bernard Malamud "The German Refugee"
Ana Menendez "In Cuba I was a German Shepherd"
Joseph Conrad "Amy Foster"

Novels:

Vladimir Nabokov **Mary**
Uva De Aragon **The Memory of Silence**
Elie Wiesel **Night**
Alexander Solzhenitsyn **One Day In the Life of Ivan Denisovich**
Jamaica Kincaid **Lucy**

Suggested Readings of selections from the following sources:

--Asher Milbauer and Sutton,
Exile in Global Literature and Culture: Homes Found and Lost
--Paul Tabory,
The Anatomy of Exile
--Ha Jin,
The Writer as Migrant
Andre Aciman,
Letters of Transit

In addition to the major works listed above, students will be assigned critical readings pertinent to the interdisciplinary study of exile.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Formal written work will consist of three 5-6-page long papers and five two-page long critical responses. Detailed instructions regarding the papers will be provided during our initial class discussions. Critical responses to all the designated readings must be

submitted prior to their discussion in class. Each response should include three substantive discussion questions. The main purpose of the personal responses is to allow students the immediacy of verbalizing their thoughts on the reading material, to provide them with a venue for organizing their thoughts on a given work of art in a streamlined and coherent manner, and to furnish the instructor with a tool to discern issues of interest to the students. The response should be written with a forward-looking view of generating topics for formal papers. The instructor reserves the right to read some of the responses in class, with the names of their respective authors remaining anonymous. All work should be submitted in a timely fashion. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus as needed. Any changes will be shared with students in advance to their implementation

Please Note: To enhance the learning experience associated with the study of literary exile, students will be exposed to several visiting lecturers, including FIU faculty and authors of books considered in the seminar. In addition, they will be invited to attend presentations by nationally renowned scholars as part of the Lecture Series, *Giving Voice to Exile: The Burdens and Privileges of Inheritance*, organized by the Exile Studies Program. Once the dates for both classroom and the lecture series are confirmed, students will be presented with a detailed course calendar.

Grades:

The three papers will account for 70% of the total grade. Critical responses and class participation will account for 30% of the total grade. Attendance is mandatory. Missed classes will affect the final grade. Class participation is strongly encouraged. More detailed instructions regarding grading policies will be provided during the first day of classes.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Honors College Requirements

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity.

Honors Citizenship Requirements

Beginning in Fall 2014, Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 citizenship points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 citizenship points. See

Honors Education in the ARTS (HEARTS)

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to “explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/hearts/>.

Honors College Academic Misconduct Statement

In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

Procedures and Penalties

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Honors College website (<https://honors.fiu.edu/honors-policies/>), and the Academic Misconduct Procedures, available at <http://integrity.fiu.edu/misconducts.html>.

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Code of Academic Integrity –<http://integrity.fiu.edu/>

College Student Handbook –<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/> FIU

Honors College Policies –<http://honors.fiu.edu/students/policies/>

Courses designated as Global Learning courses (IDH 3034-3035) must list specific Global Learning outcomes. Assignments must be able to assess the students’ ability to demonstrate these outcomes. Questions on Global Learning should be addressed to Allen Varela, <mailto:alvarel@fiu.edu>.

Global Learning Outcomes

Upper Division classes have been designated as Global Learning courses.

GL Learning Outcomes for IDH 3034-5

- ***Global Awareness:*** Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems.
- ***Course Learning Outcome:*** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated

global dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape aesthetics, values, and authority in diverse cultural contexts.

- ***Global Perspectives***: Students will be able to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
 - ***Course Learning Outcome***: Students will be able to analyze the multiple global forces that shape their understanding of aesthetics, values, and authority — economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc.
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- ***Global Engagement***: Students will be able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.
 - ***Course Learning Outcome***: Students will be able to develop solutions to local, global, international, and/or intercultural problems related to aesthetics, values, and authority.