

The workshop aims to investigate how geographical displacement of libraries or collections of books shape collective identities and function as community-building mechanism. We see the (forced) mobility of libraries in a context of migration, diaspora and exile as a highly performative gesture of identity negotiation, as a claim of continuity through narratives and allusive materialities.

Under the pressure of politics and violence, collections of books, like humans, cross borders, settle anew and speak new languages. In these circumstances, communities resort to a highly symbolic reduction of texts and books into a cohesive link. Books in search of refuge become a narratological key to tell stories about displaced identities. Libraries reflect a deeper historical construction, a craving after a lost past and a longing for an imagined future of linguistic and cultural communities: the meandering of Petrarca's library; Byzantine libraries seeking refuge in the West; the dispersion of Bibliotheca Corviniana; the confiscation of Bibliotheca Palatina; Feuchtwanger Memorial Library, the Warburg Library and Franz and the Gest Collection; wars, political oppression, linguistic or ethnic minorities crossing borders and carrying books.

Edmund De Waal's exhibition »library of exile« in Venice Biennale 2019, addressed the topics of exile and migration by introducing the subjectification of the materiality of books as a narratological key to tell stories about displaced identities. We wish to discuss the deeper connection between textual (im)materialities, displacement and identity. Discussing »exile« as both historical and metaphorical context for dispersion and re-formation of cultural communities, the workshop aims to investigate (between macro- and micro-history) patterns of ownership, networks, communication, symbolic capital and competition. We investigate semantic evolution or transformation of libraries on the move, new meanings and/or different narratives emerged through geographical, epochal or conceptual displacement of books.

We aspire to address topics of mobility, cultural extractivism, currency, value, re-appropriation and re-signification of narratives of books and about books as transcultural and trans-temporal space of identification. We aim to discuss in a global perspective the dynamics of power, types of competition, temporal entanglements as well as the materiality, mediality and performativity of exiled libraries.

Cluster of Excellence »Temporal Communities:
Doing Literature in a Global Perspective«,
Research Area 1 »Competing Communities«

Organisation

Michail Leivadiotis (Freie Universität Berlin/EXC 2020),
Nicolas Longinotti (Freie Universität Berlin)

Contact

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Venue

Freie Universität Berlin
EXC 2020 »Temporal Communities«
Raum 00.05
Otto-von-Simson-Straße 15
14195 Berlin

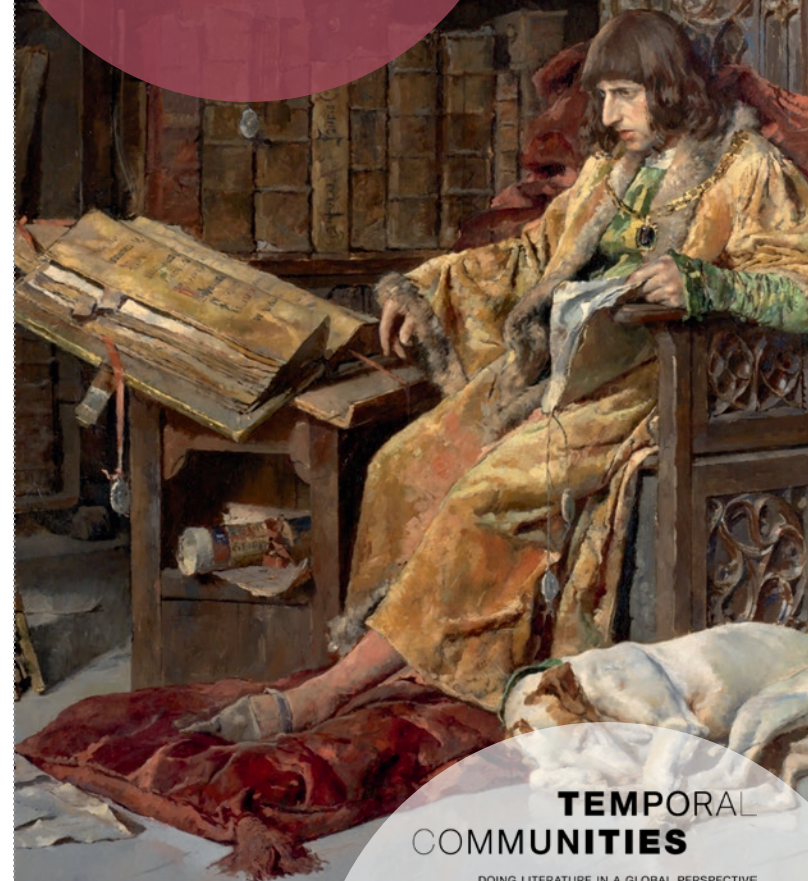


EXC 2020 »Temporal Communities:
Doing Literature in a Global Perspective«

Libraries in Exile

old books, new homes

Workshop
7-8 December 2023



Picture credit: Prince Carlos de Viana,
José Moreno Carbonero, 1881, Museo del Prado

Thursday, 7 December

13:30–14:00 *Arrival and Coffee*

14:00–14:15

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Michail Leivadiotis and Nicolas Longinotti

14:15–14:50

Rare Books in Exile: The 102 Crates of the National Peiping Library

Sophie Volpp (University of California, Berkeley)

14:50–15:25

»Nothing Is Resolved, Nothing Is Settled«:

The Afterlife of the *Library of Exile*

Edmund de Waal

15:25–15:45 *Coffee Break*

15:45–16:20

Virtual Libraries: On the Rhizomatic Qualities of Dispersed Books

Anita Traninger (Freie Universität Berlin/EXC 2020)

16:20–16:55

The Many Exiles of Babylonian Literature

Sophus Helle (Princeton University)

19:00

Dinner

Friday, 8 December

9:30–10:00 *Arrival and Coffee*

10:00–10:35

Umberto Eco's *Biblioteca di Alessandria*

Sergius Kodera (Universität Wien/EXC 2020)

10:35–11:10

A Sultan's Library on the Move

Nuria de Castilla (EPHE, PSL, Paris)

11:10–11:30 *Coffee Break*

11:30–12:05

Ruins in Print: Abd Al-Rahman Munif's Library as Archive, Artwork and Auratic Site of the Modern Middle East

Yvonne Albers (Freie Universität Berlin/EXC 2020)

12:05–12:40

Tunis as a Bibliomigratory Destination: The Collections of Franz Rosenzweig and Henri Bergson at the National Library of Tunisia

Julia Schneidawind (LMU München)

12:40–14:30 *Lunch Break*

14:30–15:05

Exilés à l'intérieur? Le devenir des manuscrits dans les collections universitaires parisiennes (16e–18e siècles)

Claire Angotti (Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne)

15:05–15:40

A Byzantine Diaspora of Books: Mapping the Field

Michail Leivadiotis (Freie Universität Berlin/EXC 2020)

15:40–16:10 *Coffee Break*

16:10–16:45

Returning From the Exile. Private and Public Libraries – Humanist Communities

Nicolas Longinotti (Freie Universität Berlin)

16:45–17:20

Material and Mental Libraries Around Francesco Petrararch

Bernard Huss (Freie Universität Berlin/EXC 2020)

17:20–18:00

Final Remarks and Discussion

18:00

Refreshment
