

ABSTRACTS

Displacement: forced migration and the arts

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Ana do Carmo

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O retorno by Dulce Maria Cardoso and the memory of a displacement

This paper intends to present a reflection on how a literary work, *O Retorno* [The Return] by Dulce Maria Cardoso, may be understood as a narrative that maps out a past moment of a historical transformation in Portugal and explores the memory of the displacement of a group, the so called "Retornados" [returned people], which deeply affected the Portuguese society from 1975 on. In *O Retorno*, Dulce Maria Cardoso echoes the experience of a displaced Portuguese family and their arrival in Portugal in 1975, narrated by a teenage boy. I will present to what extent Dulce Maria Cardoso might be considered the first Portuguese writer to produce a Portuguese "literature of the return from Africa" and if we are dealing with a form of representation in which the Portuguese are coming to terms with their colonial past.

Anne Ring Petersen

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Migrant Geography and the Politics of Containment: A Case Study of Ursula Biemann's Sahara Chronicle

Globalisation is often thought to cause an unbounded movement of capital, people, culture and goods. The often neglected flip side of globalised mobility is the increased international collaboration on border control aiming at restricting the movements of people who are forced to migrate by destitution, war or persecution. This securitisation of borders constructs novel categories of globally included and

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excluded populations. The exclusionary effect is exacerbated by the coupling of migration and crime in public and political discourses. As the criminologist Katja Franko Aas has observed, this creates a dynamics of social exclusion which deals not simply with an 'immobilised global underclass' but an illegalised global underclass.

This paper seeks to explore how artworks and cultural productions can respond to the discourses on complex political issues such as forced migration, European border policies, and the risk of reducing migrants to 'bare life' (Agamben) in the politico-juridical order. It does so by pursuing three strands of inquiry: The first strand explores forced migration on a theoretical level by drawing on political theory and criminology; the second examines Swiss artist Ursula Biemann's video essay *Sahara Chronicle* (2006-7), which is one of several examples of how contemporary artists seeking to investigate the nexus of immigration control, citizenship and human rights have crosses the boundaries between theory, political activism and the visual arts. The third strand interconnects the two others through methodological reflections on two important questions concerning the intertwinement of art and politics: First, there is the question of the particular ways in which artists translate complex issues articulated in political and philosophical discourses into visual artistic representations. The fact that such politico-activist artworks already in themselves constitute critical comments on political and social issues has implications for academics aiming to theorise and analyse such works. This lead to the second methodological question: How do scholars avoid becoming mimetic transcribers, writing a commentary on the artist's exemplary commentary, thereby seeing through the work as if it were merely a window on the world instead of seeing the world in the work and analysing how existing images of that world may be transformed by the work into a subversive politics of images?

Barbara Siller

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Strategies of locating and narrating oneself in *I am still in Vienna. Letters to my mother and my father in Turkey* by Mehmet Emir*

While displacement is discussed theoretically, the voices of the displaced ones often remain in the background. The narrative *I am still in Vienna. Letters to my mother and my father in Turkey* by the in Vienna living Kurdish-Turkish artist Mehmet Emir,

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offers an example of the speaking subaltern subject (Spivak). It presents itself as a combination of letters in which the narrator attempts to construct his personal identity as well as to draw his individual topography. Already familiar with the experience of displacement in his native country as a Kurd, a trauma among his ancestors, the protagonist has neither a clear point of origin nor one of arrival; he undergoes a further form of exile in Vienna, where he moves at the age of sixteen following his father. He is confronted with the social impermeability of spaces, with power and discipline, and with the experience of home as a paradoxical form, which constitutes itself in the interplay between absence, an imagined belonging and homecoming (Klaus Müller-Richter). These complexities notwithstanding the individual develop the competence of drafting his own geographical map through imagination and narration. Arrived neither here nor there, the last letter to his father ends symptomatically with the statement: I welcome myself in Vienna.

This paper will look at the narrator's individual trajectory of displacement from a Kurdish town in Turkey to Vienna, back and forth, now and then, particularly focusing at the individual's strategies to locate himself within intricate chrontopoi (Mikhail Bakhtin).

* own translation: originally published by the Sonderzahl Verlag in 2012 under the title *Ich bin immer noch in Wien. Briefe an Mama und Papa in der Türkei*.

Ewa Tartakowsky

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Historiographical functions of the exile memory

The memories of members of displaced group naturally reflect the subjectivity of individual life trajectories. They can also, however, converge in a collective memory and play specific functions in a new social environment and in the context of de-territorialisation. We propose to explore the historiographical functions of exile memory based on the literary production of authors of Jewish-Maghrebi origin in France in the postcolonial era.

Forming the public narrativization of the memories these people brought from their place of origin, this literature helps to build a micro-social identity. In consequence, this literature plays a central role as a social federator, transmitting a memory and guarding against forgetting and oblivion.

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This role joins the need to legitimize the exile group. This is accomplished by their inscribing their specific history into the national story. As the Jews have been a minority group throughout the entire period of their existence in North Africa, and as their narration has been minored even in the metropolitan France (the predominance of the Holocaust in the history of the French Jewry, the fact that colonial history is still considered a "past that does not pass on,") their subjective transcription of history in literature can also be understood as an active gesture to have their own history recognized. "The great charm of literature lies in the fact that it speaks of the most serious of things without asking ... to be completely taken seriously." In this way, exile literature has a function as a mediator between the displaced group and the national community.

Federica Mazzara

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Moving the Borders of Italian Spaces: Piazza Vittorio and the Aesthetics of Migration

In 2002 the Italian musician Mario Tronco and the film director Agostino Ferrente decided to create an orchestra in the multicultural area of Rome, known as the Esquilino quarter. This project came out of their desire to put together the multi-ethnic variety of musicians who were dwelling in that part of Rome. The result was truly extraordinary: a large group, constituted by almost twenty musicians from many different countries, formed the so-called "Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio" and was directed by Mario Tronco. The Orchestra is now internationally known and is currently on tour all over the world. In 2006 Agostino Ferrente made a documentary about the Orchestra telling the story of its constitution. This film received many awards and has been screened all over the world.

The same year, 2006, saw the publication of a novel by the "Italophone" Algerian writer Amara Lakhous entitled *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio* ("Clash of civilizations for an elevator in Piazza Vittorio"), which is again a story about the multicultural reality of Piazza Vittorio, an example, in fact, of the transformation of the Italian society and of the importance that Italian migrant writing has gradually gained. Lakhous' book reflects ironically and provocatively on the stereotypes and common places related to the idea of "otherness" within an Italian context; and on the traumas that forced migration implicates.

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Starting from these musical, cinematic and narrative examples, this paper aims at analysing how immigration in Italy is able to produce cultural performances that enter the larger context of popular culture, and to what extent these performances, as forms of aesthetic and cultural contributions, have been able to 'visibly' redefine Italian spaces.

Hamid Nacify

Professor of Radio-Television-Film and the Al-Thani Professor in Communication, Northwestern University.

From Accented Cinema to Global Multiplex Cinema

This talk explores the resurgence of a new global mainstream cinema in the post-diasporic and post-Internet era, which is driven by multiplicity resulting from two seemingly contradictory movements in the world intersecting with each other. One involves the increasing physical displacement and dispersion of peoples across the globe, the other from the increasing consolidation, convergence, and digitization of the media. Multiplexity emerges as a result of the multiplicity and fragmentation of various aesthetic sorts in the films: multiple languages, multiple characters, fragmented narratives driven by intersection of different times and places, multiple actors playing the part of one characters, and finally omnibus filmmaking. The presence of large displaced and globalized populations as both spectators and producers of these multiplex works are examined as well as these works' historical debt to accented filmmakers.

Joseph Nathaniel Ballan

Assistant Professor at the Institute for English, Germanic and Roman Studies, the University of Copenhagen.

Ghost Trains: Transmission of Violence in Train to Pakistan.

The proposed paper gives an account of the construction and interplay of place and displacement in Khushwant Singh's 1956 novel, *Train to Pakistan*, one of the earliest literary attempts to represent the 1947 Partition of India. Rather than following the movement of refugees from India to the newly created Muslim state of Pakistan, or the movement of Sikhs and Hindus from that region to India, Singh invents, and then focuses upon, a place—a Sikh majority village called Mano Majra, situated on the border between the two countries, and of little significance except

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for its train station—and makes of it an “oasis of peace” at the story’s outset, untouched by the interreligious violence occurring elsewhere on the subcontinent. Singh takes the measure of those upheavals from outside by observing their effects on this particular locality, beginning with the arrival at the station of a train of dead Sikhs (a “ghost train”) and proceeding to the subsequent evacuation of Muslims from, and the arrival of Sikh refugees in, the village. The paper compares the indirect representational strategy of the novel—its interest in the precise means by which events from elsewhere in the country bring about the disruption of a community by means of forced migration on a massive scale, which is to say, the precise means by which violence and compulsion is communicated and transmitted across great distances—with other indirect narratives of Partition and its consequences, such as Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* (1980) or Intizar Husain’s *Basti* (1979).

Jonas Ross Kjærgaard

PhD-student at Department of Aesthetics and Communication, Comparative Literature, Aarhus University.

Do Slaves have Human Rights? The Man/Citizen-Schism in Light of the Haitian Revolution

The distinction between man and citizen in the *Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen* (1789) has proven to be a recurring problem in the historiography of human rights and the French revolution (e.g. Marx, Arendt, Agamben, Rancière, Maslan, Moyn and Israel). Research literature on this subject has, however, often had an unfortunate tendency toward regarding citizenship as the excluding, particularistic, nationalistic – in short: bad – backside to the inclusive, universal, cosmopolitan – in short: good – notion of man. Rather than being understood as a dichotomy, the man/citizen-schism of this period should be regarded as an unsolved problem intimately connected with the attempt to establish new communities negotiating their own terms and limits.

The Haitian revolution was a crucial event in the history of slavery, and it offers an alternative approach to the man/citizen-relation because questions of freedom and equality, universalism and citizenship, take on a different appearance when the rights-claiming subject is situated not in France but in the French colony of St.-Domingue. By analyzing the political thought and practice of Toussaint L’Ouverture

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and the literary reflection on French slavery inherent in Olympe de Gouges' play *L'esclavage des nègres* (1783, 1789, 1792), the paper argues:

(i) That the man/citizen-schism is an open problem in the revolutionary decade, and one that is negotiated in both politics and literature.

(ii) That the anti-slavery and yet despotic thought and practice of Toussaint L'Ouverture is intricately connected with his inability to reach a democratic solution to the man/citizen-schism.

Linda Hammarfelt Karlsson

Postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Languages and Literatures, University of Gothenburg.

Fluid Margins. The Arctic Sea as a Place of Refuge in Contemporary German Literature

My paper focuses on two contemporary German novels that are set in arctic and antarctic environments. The novels, *Eistau* (2011) by Ilija Trojanow and *Trebeis* (1992) by Libuše Moníková, can be read in the light of contemporary discourses on postcolonialism, climate change and globalization. They reflect on these phenomena by representing attempts of flight from the 'center' – a Europe regarded by the protagonists as corrupt, brutal and false. Thus, the protagonists, two European, middle aged intellectuals, take their 'refuge' into the periphery, into the fluid landscapes of the Arctic and the Antarctic, but only to find that the problems, conflicts and inner tensions of the center that they were trying to escape are intensified at the margin, or rather that they themselves play a role in upholding what they regard as unsustainable. My presentation will illustrate how values, actions and attitudes at the core of the European project are criticized and renegotiated at the margin in the two novels as the male intellectual European is confronted with his Others: Nature, native, woman. Drawing on Jurij Lotman's definition of the relation between center and margin of the semiosphere, but also on Rosi Braidotti's concept of a 'nomadic ethics', my presentation will thus focus on peripheral spaces of refuge as spheres of ethical and aesthetical engagement.

Madeleine Dobie

Associate Professor of French, Columbia University.

Traveling Textiles: Slavery, Commodities and Global Cultural Transfer

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The plantation colonies of the first European empire produced tropical commodities, including tobacco, sugar, coffee, cotton, indigo and other dyes, that were transported to Europe then processed or manufactured and re-exported to other parts of the world. But while the impact of colonial agriculture on global material culture was considerable it was not always visible. Slave labor, in particular, was subject to various forms of cultural repression. To map the global transfers of material culture the insights of 'thing theory' and the Marxist analysis of commodity fetishism must be combined with consideration of the transcontinental sourcing of 'raw' materials, artisanal techniques and artistic traditions. This talk focuses on the case of textiles, prime mover of the industrial revolution and a driving force in the imperial circuit connecting the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia. It explores the history of the fabric known as 'chintz' or 'calico' in English and '*toiles peintes*' or '*indiennes*' in French: a textile that exercised a transformative impact on European, American and Indian culture and industry as it migrated from East to West and back. It shows that while the enslavement of Africans in the Americas was a condition of the global spread of cotton, slavery was often effaced exoticizing references to oriental origins and craftsmanship. The question of the visibility/invisibility of colonial history is one that has been explored by several contemporary artists. The talk ends with a discussion of the work of Florent Moutty, a French visual artist who has used eighteenth-century printed cotton textiles as a canvas for his explorations of identity and diversity in today's France.

Michael Berkowitz

Professor of Modern Jewish History, Department of Hebrew & Jewish Studies, University College London.

Displaced Jews and photography: from photojournalism to art

Numerous Jewish photographers, whose work concerns forced migration--and who themselves were victims of forced migration, have recently been the subject of exhibitions and surveys (such as Robert Capa and "Chim" [David Seymour] at New York's International Center for Photography, and Gerti Deutsch at the Austrian Cultural Forum in London). Two major aspects of their experience and legacy, however, have not received appropriate treatment: the fact that Jews in photography were able to benefit from well-established networks of Jews (outside the Nazi orbit, that is) especially in the interwar and wartime (1939-1945) pictorial press. From this perspective, the role of editors such as Stefan Lorant of London's

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Picture Post is critical. It also is apparent that the reception of photojournalism changed markedly during the this period. On the one hand, photojournalists and their work became more 'respectable' through the efforts of Erich Salomon, Robert Capa, Chim, and Alfred Eisenstaedt (and others). At the same time, their work began to be regarded as having artistic merit. This, too, happened largely through Jewish networks, with the early Jewish photo-historians Helmut Gernsheim and Peter Pollack among the first to recognize photojournalists as "artists." Preeminent images that seemed to bridge the realms of photojournalism and art were photographs related to the displacement of Jews and other peoples in the context of war and ethnic/national conflict generally.

Moritz Schramm

Assistant Professor at the University of Southern Denmark and member of the steering group *Network for Migration and Culture (NMC)*.

Aesthetics of multiplicity: Abbas Khider's literary description of flight and exile

Abbas Khider, born 1973 in Baghdad, has in recent years gained vast attention in the field of German literature: especially his novels *Der falsche Inder* (2008, transl. *The Village Inder*, 2013), *Die Orangen des Präsidenten* (2011) and *Brief in die Auberginenrepublik* (2013) has been praised as some of the most outstanding novel's in contemporary German literature. They offer some of the most advanced descriptions of the experience of torture, the difficulties of flight and border crossing, and the living in exile and diaspora, partly as asylum-seeker or in illegality. In the paper I will try to give an account of his literary strategies and thematic development: especially the use of humor and the strategy of multiple perspectives, he is using in his novels, are of interest for me: by describing the same story through different protagonist viewpoints, he opens for a more complex understanding of the social and political condition of exile, as we are used to in most of the others literary works on that field. At the same time the novels are all dealing with some kind of meta-reflection on the role of literature, language and writing under the circumstances of exile and illegality: e.g. the setting in his first novel, where an abounded manuscript has been found in a train in Germany, giving eight different perspectives on the same young Iraqi's story of imprisonment in Baghdad in the aftermath of the uprising against Saddam Hussein in the early 1990th, his flight through various countries in North Africa and Europe, and his

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attempt to get hold on legal papers in Western Europe can be seen not only as a description of the contemporary experience of displacement, but also as an reflection on the role of literature and art in representing those political stories (a somehow similar approach we see in his most recent novel, where the main "protgaonist" is a letter, send from an Iraqi-refugee in Libya to his family in Baghdad). Khider's novels thus, I will argue, open for a new understanding of the relation of politics and aesthetics, where the idea of authentic representation of reality is replaced by the account of multiple perspectives and by literary meta-reflections on the experience of displacement, exile and diaspora.

Parvati Nair

Professor of Hispanic, Cultural and Migration Studies at Queen Mary University of London from where she is currently on secondment to work as Founding Director of the United Nations University Institute in Barcelona, Spain.

Witnessing Displacement: Historical Interventions in the Photography of Sebastião Salgado

In this paper, I consider the role of engaged photo-documentary in constructing spaces in which to witness displacement. Central here is the notion of witness, whereby the act of visual engagement leads first to questioning and then to a repositioning of history. I shall argue that Salgado's images provide a critique of dominant views of late modernity by foregrounding the ruptures and losses that occur in those parts of the world whose histories are dissonant with those of the West. The Euro-centricism of current historical theories thus finds a counterpoint in these images of the historically and economically displaced, that is at once contrastive and dialogic. Most importantly, I shall argue that these photographs, which often dwell on the eye motif, a key feature of Salgado's work, provide a counter-gaze that is directed at the hegemonic West from a subaltern point of view.

Peter Leese

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Bolex Aesthetics: The Memory Films of Robert Vas and Jonas Mekas

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The Bolex 16mm was a relatively cheap, easy to use, and readily available cine camera for aspiring film-makers after the Second World War. It did not record sound, nor was it possible to film continuously for more than a minute before the spring mechanism had to be rewound. Yet for two refugees, Robert Vas (b. Budapest, Hungary, 1931) and Jonas Mekas (b. Semeniškiai, Lithuania, 1922), these technical limitations fostered distinctive recollections of their migrant past.

Reflecting on his departure from Budapest following the failed uprising of 1956, Robert Vas commented, 'We had nothing to stay for . . .'; giving a title to his diaries for the years 1944-55, Jonas Mekas settled on *I Had Nowhere to Go*. Both men had painful, dispiriting experiences in the Second World War, both felt themselves stopped dead by the communist authorities of their respective homelands. Yet within two weeks of his arrival in New York Mekas had purchased his first Bolex and begun his film diaries. He subsequently edited fifteen years of these diaries for *Lost, Lost, Lost* (1976). Similarly, soon after his arrival in London Robert Vas was awarded a small grant from the British Film Institute and quickly made his first short film about a Hungarian refugee's first day in London, *Refugee England* (1959).

A camera for home movies-makers and film students, the Bolex easily roved around the city, its gaze intimate and subjective. Yet Mekas and Vas remembered in different ways, and with different consequences; each subsequently developed a distinct visual language of migratory landscape, feeling and morality. What I want to explore here is two distinct forms of migrant memory and sensibility, each initially prompted by the Bolex.

Renée Ridgway

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Hortus Malabaricus in 2013

The VOC's taking, undertakings and un-doings still form a part of India's contemporary landscape. Drawing on the Dutch archives in The Hague, the Herbarium in Leiden and in India, I discovered a reference work that remains living proof of positive colonial encounters. The Hortus Malabaricus was printed in Amsterdam between 1678-1693 and is the earliest comprehensive work on the flora of Malabar, illustrating around 740 indigenous plants whilst explaining their

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medicinal properties, with captions in 4 languages (Latin, Malayalam, Arabic, Konkani Brahmin).

The contents of the Hortus Malabaricus are brought to mind in 'The Unwanted Land' at Museum Beelden aan Zee (2010-2011), which addressed migration from the perspective of 6 emigré artists. My installations consisted of 3 stagings, contained with and extended from huge scaffolding serving as a frame for VOC (de) territorialized cartography. Here one could freely move through lands of emigration, immigration, assimilation and disintegration, thus visualizing insights into the psychological and physical states of migration. In February 2012 I exhibited these 3 video installations in 'The Wanted Land' at David Hall, Fort Cochin, India, a former apothecary now gallery space and the exact location where historians believe the Hortus Malabaricus was originally produced.

For the conference Displacements: forced migration and the arts, I would like to show images of these two exhibitions and if desired, 'The Wanted Land'. In this single-channel 10-minute video, local people explain how Dutch colonisation was experienced and understood in Fort Cochin and how mobility of the 16th-17th centuries created a situation where the VOC transported people within its 'territories', as slaves, servants or free citizens. These business outposts were not contiguous with national boundaries of the time, yet are still a characteristic of corporate behaviour of today. In the video, 21st century genealogies and exchanges of information favouring oral tradition enables fresh historical perspectives to emerge.

Sidsel Nelund

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How can we see what they say? Opacity and impossibility in The Otolith Group's *Nervus Rerum* and Hito Steyerl's *The Kiss*

How can one depict people in war or refugees in a refugee camp? This question has been considered over and over again, yet it remains urgent.

In this paper I discuss two artworks that question the role of the image in relation to a state of exception and a situation of displacement. The Otolith Group's video

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Nervus Rerum (2008) takes place in the Jenin refugee camp in Palestine and Hito Steyerl's video installation *The Kiss* (2010) unwraps a moment of deportation in the war in ex-Yugoslavia.

Drawing on theorists such as Ariella Azoulay, Judith Butler, Édouard Glissant and Susan Sontag, I analyze how these artworks challenge the transparency of the image and its possibility of providing us with information. Finally, I suggest that the artworks develop theoretical and artistic strategies of visually thinking and contesting representation, namely through articulating and materializing opacity and the impossibility of the image.

Sine Jensen Smed

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Danish literary representations of the Danish West Indies

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Denmark, like other European countries, gained colonial possessions. Recently, the interest for this part of the Danish history has increased, but a lot remains to be done, when it comes to Danish literary representations of the Danish West Indies. There is no strong literary tradition in Danish colonial literature and the literary representations of The Danish West Indies are few. However I argue that there was an important connection between Denmark and the colonies, for example in the period from 1800 to 1849. Here the debates about slavery and the debates about civil rights and the Danish constitution took place at the same time. In the presentation I will talk about the Danish writer Henrik Hertz's short novel *The Free-coloured* (1836) where my focus will be on A) civil rights and the concept of race in the light of the Haitian revolution and B) The conception and representation of "Danishness", the Danish civilization; the development of nation and nationalism in a colonial context. A focus during the presentation will also be the challenges and problems one will face when researching this field of study.

Sophia Ogwude

Professor at the Faculty of Arts, University of Abuja, Nigeria.

Migration and Empowerment in New Nigerian Fiction

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Migration is a near permanent condition for creative artists and intellectuals in African because our governments have become adept at creating conditions particularly antithetical to serious academic work. Good governance encourages creativity even as its absence provokes migration.

Nevertheless, the home from which these writers come continues to fuel productivity. Earlier narratives were largely autobiographical even in their interrogation of socio-political anomalies. The new migrant narratives which form the basis of the present enterprise dwell on the exposition of historical events celebrating the indomitable human spirit of the unsung heroes of these events. They call to question fundamental socio-political issues relating to the relationships between their mother homes, that is the homes from which they have migrated and their new father homes, being the ones to which they have migrated. Oftentimes, this polarity can be equated as: colonised/coloniser, Africa/Europe or the United States, developing/developed, south/north. Their representations constitute solid bases for the dialogue of our present, but in such a way as to question the past and point a way forward for the future.

This paper examines the works of two migrant Nigerian writers, Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Biyi Bandele's *Burma Boy* (2007); it proposes to show that these works bear immediate relevance to the present even while ostensibly concerned with the past; it argues further that these works yield readily to fruitful post-colonial enquiry and it delineates the spatial limits of these writers as astride Home and City.

Sumugan Sivanesan

Sumugan Sivanesan is an anti-disciplinary artist engaged in post-graduate research and creative practice at the School of Transforming Cultures at the University of Technology, Sydney.

He lectures *Experimental Film and Video* at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales.

Meeting 'Alex' (in proximity to the Other of politics.)

For a brief period of time Sanjeev 'Alex' Kuhendrarajah was sought after as the self-styled spokesperson for 254 Tamils who were refusing to disembark from a small wooden cargo boat docked off the Indonesian port of Merak, fleeing the aftermath of the war in Sri Lanka, 2009. However it was soon revealed that the charismatic Kuhendrarajah, was not the English teacher with an MBA as he had

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initially informed the media, but a former Toronto street gang member who had been gaoled and then deported to Sri Lanka for his involvement in organised crime. Despite this initial deception, Kuhendrarajah retained his media profile and garnered support, largely due to the sympathetic rapport he developed with the Australian journalist Stephen Fitzpatrick.

This paper will discuss the narrative constructed around Sanjeev and its interplay with the rhetoric arising from negotiations between the governments of Australia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka to effectively criminalise asylum seekers. These events forced me to consider my own Tamil heritage and Australian citizenship alongside an earlier history of South Asian shipborne politics and anti-colonial solidarity. This culminated in the tattoo-performance work *Jump Ship* (2010).

In May this year I will attempt to visit Kuhendrarajah at the Bangkok detention centre where he is now incarcerated, and to meet face to face with the Other by which I am determining my conceptions of sovereignty, citizenship, belonging and displaced allegiances.



Jump Ship 2010.

Sumugan Sivanesan with WT Norbert.

Gaffa gallery, Sydney.

Svend Erik Larsen

Professor, dr.phil. and Editor of *Orbis Litterarum*, Department of Aesthetics and Communication, Section of Comparative Literature, Aarhus University.

Forced to leave or forced to stay. What's the difference?

Forced migration is a displacement with a double perspective. In many cases the flip side of forced extradition is a forced containment, inseparable from the

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displacement: the ghetto, the prison, the bantustans, the Westbank. How different is it, in terms of living conditions, values, imaginations, to be forced to leave or to be forced to stay? In some cases, or rather from a certain view point, both the movement and the confinement may be seen as a protection – of society, of ethnic purity, of the displaced persons themselves; from another view point they may both appear as unjust condemnation, persecution or punishment. This double perspective may also emerge when people are forced to stay as in North Korea, in the former DDR or South Africa, or in many rural parts of Europe until the late 18th century . Today, the forced displacement is a global phenomenon, often released by transnational crises and conflicts: wars, slow down of world economy, fight for energy resources etc. This fact may lead some to adapt a purely universalist perspective, often with reference to crimes against humanity and international human rights. But the moment *force* is involved, as in forced displacement, one perspective is never enough. There will always be the view point of those exercising the power and the subjects of oppression; the interpretation of the displacement from the point of view of mobility and that of dwelling; the view of the situation as protection or persecution does not belong to the same perspective; and finally, the individual point of view, as for the outlaw some societies , the imprisoned or the PoW, as opposed to the collective experience of a diaspora. Art and literature take issue with precisely such a differentiated double perspective and its effects on the transformation of identities, value systems and beliefs, often influenced by culturally and historically contexts, now and then immersed with religious images like 'a living hell' referring to the ultimate forced displacement recognizable across cultures and religions. What are the reasons to adapt certain interpretations, rhetorical discourses or types of imaginary expressions: propaganda, dictatorship, colonial strategies, gender, ideology, survival, existential needs, cultural tradition?

Tone Olaf Nielsen and Morten Goll

TONE OLAF NIELSEN is a Copenhagen-based independent curator. MORTEN GOLL is a socio-politically engaged artist, working with social platforms for political change and one of the founders of the Trampoline House.

The Trampoline House: Conducting Refugee Justice and Asylum Activism with Anti-Capitalist Art and Curating

Approximately 6,000 asylum seekers are currently living in Denmark in out-of-the-way asylum centers run by the Danish Red Cross on behalf of the Danish state,

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while they wait for their asylum application to be processed or to be deported. During those waits, which can take years, asylum seekers are not allowed to work or to choose their own accommodation, and live in a limbo of uncertainty, isolation, and pacification with little possibility to build relations to the surrounding society and to take command of their own lives.

In reaction to this critical situation, socially engaged artists Morten Goll and activist curator Tone Olaf Nielsen established in collaboration with artist Joachim Hamou and a large network of asylum seekers and asylum activists the Trampoline House in October 2010: a user-driven refugee justice community center located in Copenhagen, where refugees and other residents of Denmark can meet, share experiences, and work together for a just and humane refugee and asylum policy. The center operates as a non-profit, self-organized platform for social interaction, knowledge exchange, and solidarity building across boundaries of privilege, exclusion, and inequality, and offers a series of services and activities intended partly to inform the Danish population about the conditions for refugees living in the Danish asylum centers or underground, and partly to provide refugees and asylum seekers in Denmark with a platform from which to better their situation.

In different ways, the project has contributed to establishing a genuine 'systemkritik' in Denmark, offering a platform for anti-racist, anti-colonial, and anti-capitalist critique and action. In their joint lecture, Goll and Nielsen will introduce the mission and methodologies of the house as an example of aesthetic migration justice and asylum activism and will discuss the ability of art and curating to affect social and political change.