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**CTCS 510**  
**STATELESS, REFUGEE, MIGRANT CINEMAS**  
 Spring 2017, SCA 216  
 Wednesdays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
 TA: Monica Dominguez

In this seminar, we will read/view historical, visual and representational material to comprehend the contemporary moment when the number of displaced persons surpasses post-World War II figures for refugees (reaching 65.3 million in 2015, according to a UNHRC Report). Even as Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm characterized the first half of the twentieth century as the “apogee of nationalism,” others such as Terry Eagleton thought of it as best illuminated by the sensibility of exiles and émigrés (Conrad, James, Pound, Yeats and Joyce, in Eagleton’s analysis). The end of World War II marked an important shift in global consciousness about displaced persons, as several nations dealt with the problem of the refugee at a legislative and juridical level. Internal displacements, slave trade and indentured labor far preceded this history of uprooting, but the experience of being placeless entered policy, literature, theory and analysis in new ways in the twentieth century, betraying the Eurocentricism of global culture. By the latter half of the twentieth century, with globalization militating against national boundaries through collusions between states and transnational corporations, popular and academic discourse participated in a concomitant valorization of the exile as a cosmopolitan subject.

Against celebrations of porous national boundaries and diasporic consciousness, the 2016 US Presidential elections, Brexit, right-wing European and Asian ethno-nationalisms, and a failing global will to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis appears incomprehensible. To what extent is our difficulty in understanding the present crisis also a failure to understand how nationalism, globalization, and state power have always worked? Is this about the lessons of history lost on humanity, or are these new lessons? What is new and what is recursive about this moment?

Putting films that focus on the dispossession or variable integration of populations and subjects front and center allows us some latitude in approaching such difficult questions. It allows us to: (a) study visual media and critical essays that comment upon the formation of subjects and their rights through their identification with, and dispossession by, nation-states; (b) consider the possibilities for thought, speech and everyday life supported by such writing and visual media; (c) understand the connections between such artistic and theoretic works, and historical configurations such as ‘citizen,’ ‘refugee,’ ‘migrant,’ ‘nomad,’ etc. We will use these overlapping ways to tackle the themes of this seminar.

Please note that the course readings will rarely refer directly to the film screened; rather, the material will be used collectively to generate a series of ideas around weekly themes. *Making or debating the connections will be your task. I will depend on your willingness to read, research, and contribute to these themes and questions.*

### Required Books

- \* Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge UP, 1990).
  - \* Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*. (Picador, 2004).
  - \* Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (Columbia, 2010)
- Recommended for Reference: Hamid Naficy, *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. (Princeton, 2001)
- \* Online course reader on *Blackboard*.

### Weekly Schedule

#### Week One January 11

Introduction + Workshop to decide final course assignments (One project tailored to correspond to each student's needs; One collaborative class project TBD, see options under assignments).

Stewart Lee on UKIP leader Paul Nuttal: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eusOPQotliw>

Screening: Alfonso Cuarón, *Children of Men* (USA/UK, 2006), 1 hr 49 mins.

#### Week Two January 18

##### **Refugees: The Limits of a Political Community**

Readings: Hannah Arendt, "The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man," *Imperialism* (Chapter 5); Giorgio Agamben, "We Refugees" *Symposium*, 1995. No. 49 (2), 114-119; Primo Levi, *The Black Hole of Auschwitz*, from "The Time of the Swastikas" to "A Past We Thought Would Never Return" (Chapters 4 to 12). [suggested: Ponzanesi and Coplani (eds). *Postcolonial Transitions in Europe: Contexts, Practices and Politics*. (2016), pp. xi – xxv.

Definitions: Refugees. Migrants. See <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>

12:30 pm Event: Rally @ Cesar Chavez Park for DACA students and immigrants, brief presentation by Dr. Niels W. Frenzen, Professor of Immigration and Refugee law.

Please screen for yourselves Jia Zhangke's *Shijie* (China, *The World*, 2004), prior to our next class meeting.

#### Week Three January 25

##### **Political Beings under National and Transnational Regimes**

Readings: Hobsbawm, Chapters 1 through 4; Saskia Sassen, "The De Facto Transnationalization of Immigration Policy," *Globalization and its Discontents*; Jenny Lau, "Migrant workers, women, and China's modernization on screen," *Jumpcut*

Definitions: Citizen. Political Refugee. Economic Refugee. See Ambalavaner Sivanandan (2000). "Casualties of Globalism," *The Guardian* 8 August.

Podcast: *This American Life* Act One “No Island is an Island” on Nauru <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/253/the-middle-of-nowhere>

Screening: Milcho Manchevski, *Before the Rain* (Macedonia, 1994), 1 hour 53 mins.

#### Week Four Feb 1

##### Ethnicity in the Geographies of Love and Hatred

Readings: Hobsbawm, Chapters 5 & 6; Jonathan Rutherford, “Interview with Homi Bhabha: The Third Space”; Arjun Appadurai, “Fear of Small Numbers,” “Our Terrorists Ourselves,” from *The Fear of Small Numbers*.

Definitions: Hate crimes. Genocide. Consult <http://www.teachgenocide.org/files/UN%20Definition%20of%20Genocide.pdf>  
<https://www.splcenter.org>

Podcast: *This American Life*, Act One “You just keep on pushing my love over the borderline” <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/593/dont-have-to-live-like-a-refugee?act=1>

Screening: Atom Egoyan, *Calendar* (Armenia, 1993), 1 hour 14 mins.

#### Week Five Feb 8

##### On Always Being Elsewhere

Readings: Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” from *Reflections on Exile*; Ranajit Guha, “The Migrant’s Time”; Salman Rushdie, “Out of Kansas,” in *Step Across the Line*; Salman Rushdie, “Imaginary Homelands”; Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy”; Nick Couldry, “Being Elsewhere.” (For reference: Hamid Naficy, “Close-Up: Atom Egoyan’s *Calendar*” pp. 136-140.)

Definitions: Exile. Nomad. (For reference: Thomas Nail, *The Figure of the Migrant*. “Nomad.”)

Screening: Hany Abu-Assad, *Paradise Now* (Palestine, 2005), 1 hour 30 mins.

#### Week Six Feb 15

##### Regarding Fear, Pity and Empathy

Readings: Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*; Alex Lykidis, “A Pedagogy of Humility.” (For reference: Francesca Falk, “Invasion, Infection, Invisibility: An Iconology of Illegalization of Immigration”; Renee van de Vall, “Immersion and Distance in Virtual Spaces,” in Verstraete and Cresswell, *Mobilizing Place*).

Definitions: Terrorism. Human Rights. Consult: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2005/gal3276.doc.htm>  
<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

Screening: Fred Schepisi, *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* (Australia, 1978), 120 min.

### Week Seven Feb 22

#### Politics of Recognition/Politics of Refusal

Readings: Audra Simpson, *Mobawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*, selection TBA; Sadiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*, “Prologue: The Path of Strangers” and “The Tribe of the Middle Passage.”)

Definitions: The Middle Passage. Indigenous Peoples. Internally Displaced Persons and Tribes. Consult <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/internally-displaced-people.html>; <http://www.internal-displacement.org/south-and-south-east-asia/india/summary>

Screening: Kamal Aljafari, *Recollection* (Palestine, 2015), 70 mins.

### Week Eight March 1

#### Confinement, Expulsion and Erasure

Readings: Hamid Dabashi in conversation with Kamal Aljafari: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMzZ9i0tJ38>; Peter Limbrick, “Contested Spaces: Kamal Aljafari’s Transnational Palestinian Films”, in *A Companion to German Cinema*, ed. Andrea Mensch and Terri Ginsberg. Oxford, Blackwell, 2012. 218-48; Edward Said, “The Palestinian Question after Camp David” in *The Question of Palestine: Chomsky and Pappé, On Palestine*.

Definitions: Occupied Territories. Settler Colonialisms.

Screening: Gregory Nava, *El Norte* (UK/USA, 1983), 2 hours 21 mins.

### Week Nine March 8

#### Crossings

Readings: Thomas Nail, “Centripetal Force and Land Grabbing” in *The Figure of the Migrant* (Chapter 13); Saskia Sassen, “America’s Immigration ‘Problem’” from *Globalization and its Discontents*; List, Chris. “*El Norte*: Ideology and Immigration.” *Jump Cut* (1989): 27-31.

Define: Economic Migrants.

Screening: Anand Gandhi, *Ship of Theseus* (India, 2012), 2 hours 20 mins.

### Week Ten March 15

\*\*SPRING RECESS\*\*

### Week Eleven March 22

#### Alternative Mappings of Rights, Justice, Personhood

Readings: Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice*; Hannah Arendt, “What Remains? Language Remains,” from *Essays in Understanding*.

Screening: TBD by Student Group 1

### Week Twelve March 29

Readings: TBD by Student Group 1

Screening: TBD by Student Group 2

**Week Thirteen** April 5

Readings: TBD by Student Group 2

Screening: TBD by student Group 2

**Week Fourteen** April 12

Readings: TBD by Student Group 3

Complete Collaborative Class Project

**Week Fifteen** April 19

Final Project Presentations

**Week Sixteen** April 26

Final Project Presentations

**Seminar Assignments and Expectations**

1. Attendance and Participation (5%): You will be expected to attend all seminar sessions. In case of an emergency, please inform me as soon as you are able, and provide documentation. In case you have any other unavoidable absences, I will expect you to inform me ahead of time via email. More than one absence will impact your overall grade negatively. Be prepared to be present and to participate in discussion every session. Please do not use electronic devices during class, other than your laptop for taking notes.

2. Presentations (10%+10%+5%):

(a) On the Readings (10%): Everyone will lead discussion once this term, probably with a partner given high enrollments. You may structure the discussion format as you please, but do make sure we cover the following: identify central arguments of the chapters / essays that you are focusing on (specific page numbers are always helpful); identify your position in relation to those arguments; highlight important questions for discussion. If you are confused or are unclear about some aspects of the readings, you should raise them. Try to end with a simple directive that generates further discussion. Avoid presenting your own overly worked out arguments or long questions, which tend to deaden discussion. I will limit your comments to 10 minutes.

A few questions you might ask yourself after you complete the readings are whether you understand and agree with: the basic argument of the reading; its position and contribution to larger debates; the validity of its arguments; its relevance to your research questions; its insights for a discussion of media / culture.

(b) On the Film (10%): Everyone will lead discussion on the film screened the previous week once during the term. Try to pick a film not from the week where you are presenting the readings. Identify key aspects of the film that need or could benefit from further discussion in class. Your comments on the film (e.g, related to the class themes, and to specific aspects of the film's style, structure, characters etc) should not exceed 5 minutes.

(c) Definitions (5%): For each week, one or two people will research the terms listed under "Definitions." While you may relate these terms to the readings or screenings,

your main goal will be to research the term as defined by key intergovernmental organizations (such as the United Nations, the EU) or relevant nation-states (such as the US, Canada, Israel, India, as pertains to the week's discussion). You have some links to assist you.

3. Written response (10%): For any two of the nine weeks, you will be required to submit a three page synopsis of any reading of the week, synopsizing the argument of the piece and discussing its insights or shortcomings. You are encouraged to pick the week of your presentation for one of these weeks.

4. Course Planning (15%): In groups of five, students will set the screening and readings for one class meeting. This will be discussed further in class.

5. Final Project (35% + 10%):

(a) One project tailored to your needs: On Week Two, following our open discussion on Week One, you will hand in for my approval your assignment for your final project. I will expect the assignment you give yourself to match the rigorous expectations of a graduate course. Your assignments may include: a draft of your first PhD screening document; a draft of an area of your first PhD screening document, with a partially annotated bibliography; a syllabus; a treatment for a film; a short film; the draft of a well-researched piece to submit to an academic journal or a popular press or magazine.

This final project should relate to the topic of visual media in relation to stateless, refugee and migrant subjects. Other than this requirement, your final project will be determined by you, contingent on my approval of the project.

(b) One collaborative class project: To be decided in class discussion on Week One. Some potential ideas:

- Extended Annotated Bibliography
- Annotated Filmography.
- Website with all your projects online, with added links and usable resources.
- A collaborative teaching dossier on any topic relevant to the immigration debates
- Any other?

## POLICIES

### **Class Policies**

Papers should be turned in on time. Grades will be deducted for late submission. In the absence of a legitimate reason that you have discussed with your TA or me ahead of time (e.g., family emergency or illness), papers that are more than three days late will not be accepted.

The grade of A is given to exceptional work, B to work that meets the requirements, and C to work that falls below expectation, that does some part of the assignment but not all, or not very well. D is given to work that does not meet several of an assignment's basic requirements regarding clarity, analysis, organization, length etc.

Please make sure you proof read all the papers you hand in for grammatical or typographical errors, because a poorly written paper distracts from the best argument. If you are ever unclear about the requirements of an assignment, please ask me or your TAs. **Doing additional assignments for extra credit is not an option.**

It is not respectful to me or to your classmates to sit in class and pursue other work. You are permitted to bring your laptops to seminar, but please refrain from doing anything online that is not immediately related to the class.

## **Department and University Policies**

### **Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to the Professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213)740-0776.

### **Academic Integrity**

**USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment.** General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless an instructor allows otherwise, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus contains a Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions for violating this code are located in Appendix A, both can be found at <http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty, students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for review. The review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

**Keep in mind that PLAGIARISM (WHETHER DONE INTENTIONALLY OR NOT) WILL BE REPORTED, WILL MOST LIKELY RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE COURSE, AND COULD LEAD TO DISMISSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY.** If you have any questions about academic integrity, plagiarism, or if you have any questions or doubts about how to properly cite a source, see your Teaching Assistant, drop by the Writing Center (Taper Hall 310) or consult the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards Guide - <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tig.pdf>.

### **Course Exam, Project and Paper Retention Policy**

It is the responsibility of all students in Cinema and Media Studies courses to retrieve all papers, projects, assignments and/or exams within one academic year of completion of a course. These records may be essential in resolving grade disputes and incompletes as well as assist in verifying that course requirements have been met. The

Cinema and Media Studies Division will dispose of all records from the previous academic year in May of the current academic year. No exceptions.