PhD Research Project (Abstract)

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Interexilic correspondences and imagined communities.
Transnational, transcultural, and transhistorical networks of/in exile literature
(working title)

This PhD project examines the exile's literary texts between 1933 and 1945, of the interim period as well as the present time, that refer implicitly or explicitly back to historical or modern-day exile experiences, their literary renderings, and writings. Although every exile experience is likely to be unique, allusions, quotes, and adaptations can be found in exile texts that update, and remind of, other exile situations, their writings, and their authors.

The proposition guiding this research is that the dialogue between exile texts in the sense of interlinked stories/history is to be understood as a driving force of the globalisation of literature and to be read as a phenomenon of a transnational, transcultural, and transhistorical reminiscence. The intertextual references sensitise to the memory of exile literature and, at the same time, intermedial arrangements demonstrate communication with other forms of art. These observations of an after-life of exile are followed by the question to what extent referential connections give rise to imagined experience-based, narrative-based, and reminiscence-based communities.

Can the references be conceived of as strategies that face voicelessness and disorientation as a result of an immediate escape and that, at the same time, evoke traumatic gaps of exile experiences and recount them?

The main goal of this paper is to refine, and establish in the scientific discourse, the term of ‘interexilic correspondences’ (due to Alfrun Kliems), which has been suggested for this interconnectedness of exile's literary texts. Therefore, this analysis is of particular relevance for the recent exile (literature) research within the area of cultural studies as well as for the re-conceptualisation of the comprehensive term ‘exile literature’ that covers various national literatures and historical periods.