

School of Business & Management
Research Seminar Series

Literary Representations of 21st Century African and Asian Migration to Europe

THURSDAY, 18th of February
14:00-15:00

MS Teams
by Dr. Olga Michael,
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The first two decades of this century have witnessed the publication of a growing number of narratives concerning contemporary migration in Europe, written individually or collectively, by Asian, African and/or European authors. Literary criticism on them is scarce and, when it exists, it examines them mainly from national perspectives. To our knowledge, very few attempts have been made to describe these novels systematically from a pan-European perspective in relation to theory, method, corpus, generic type, individual or collective authorship, border and periphery/center, and multi-voiced modes of narration, including the gaze of the migrant, among other literary and taxonomic criteria. Even fewer attempts have been made to systematically analyze such works as a distinct literary genre that has emerged in Europe at the dawn of the 21st-century and that is struggling to be part of European literatures. To this end, this paper introduces the neologism 'ethno-topographic narrative' to classify, define and describe this new literary genre in the making, that is, we argue, a dynamic part of European literatures, which attempts to unsettle the monolithic European canon, rejecting, as it does so, the label of the 'exotic.' Our methodological approach draws from decolonial and postcolonial theory, transnational, mobility and refugee studies, border aesthetics and cognitive poetics.

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Biography:

Olga Michael is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Cyprus. Her research interests include refugee and migration comics, contemporary graphic life narratives of human rights violations, women's life writing, as well as trauma and gendered violence in testimonial literature. Her most recently published and forthcoming work includes, inter alia, "21st-Century Migration to Europe and the Rise of the 'Ethno-topographic Narrative,'" (Studies in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature, special issue "Narratives of Migration to Europe," co-authored with Nelson González-Ortega), "Injurious Metaphors and (Non-)Art as Activist Counter-Discourse to Greece's 'Refugee Crisis,'" (Representing 21st-Century Migration to Europe: Performing Migrant Identities, Bodies and Texts, Berghahn – provisional), and "Crossing, Conflict and Diaspora in Cyprus and beyond in Miranda Hoplaros and Lara Alphas' Graphic Novel, The Sign Maker" (a/b:Auto/biography Studies).