The spring of 1919 saw the brutal end of the Bavarian soviet republic that had emerged as part of Germany’s November Revolution. Twenty years later, on May 22, 1939, Ernst Toller, one of the leaders of that revolution and republic, committed suicide at the Mayflower Hotel in New York, where he was living in exile from Nazi Germany. We are commemorating these anniversaries with this conference on German-speaking émigrés in New York and the United States, and their legacy for the exiles and refugees who are arriving in the US and Europe today, i.e. for the unfolding global migration crisis.
THURSDAY, MAY 30

1:00-1:30 – Check-in

1:30-2:00 – Greetings & Introductions
Lisa Marie Anderson, Hunter College, City University of New York
Christiane Schönfeld, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

2:00-3:00 – Keynote lecture: “Search Movements: Literature and Politics between the Wars”
Stefan Neuhaus, University of Koblenz-Landau (introduced by Christiane Schönfeld)

3:15-4:15 – Panel 1: Revolutionaries (Chair: Elke Nicolai, Hunter College)
Jörg Thunecke, Westdeutsche Akademie für Kommunikation, “Revolutionary Impatience: Ret Marut’s Role during the Munich Soviet Republic”
Theidel von Wallmoden, Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen, “Buffaloes and Swallows: Rosa Luxemburg’s and Ernst Toller’s Letters from Prison”

4:15-4:45 – Coffee break

4:45-6:00 – Panel 2: Exile Literature (Chair: Aine Zimmerman, Hunter College)
Steffan Davies, University of Bristol, “Der Wille zum wirklich Wahren: Language and Reality in Heinrich Mann’s Exile Novels”
Andrea Capovilla, University of London, “Das siebte Wien: The Poems of Fritz Brainin as Life Writing”

6:00-7:00 – Welcome reception & book launch sponsored by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in New York
Yasemin Pamuk, Head of Cultural Affairs and Science, Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in New York

Dinner – own arrangements

FRIDAY, MAY 31

9:00-10:15 am – Panel 3: Toller in/as Exile (Chair: Stefan Neuhaus, Universität Koblenz-Landau)
Veronika Schuchter, University of Innsbruck: “Die Nazis wissen recht gut, was ich draußen getan habe...’: Ernst Tollers Briefe aus dem Exil, 1933-1939”
Peter Langemeyer, Østfold University College, “Ernst Toller’s Eine Jugend in Deutschland as Exile Literature?”
Christiane Schönfeld, Mary Immaculate College, “Ernst Toller’s Film Projects: Life as Exile”

10:15-10:30 – Coffee break
Deborah Vietor-Engländer, formerly Technical University of Darmstadt, President of the Alfred Kerr Stiftung (introduced by Lisa Marie Anderson)

11:45-12:45 – Panel 4: The Politics of Exile (Chair: Britta C. Jung, University College Dublin)
Aoife McInerney, University of Limerick, “Homelessness, Dehumanization, and Alienation: Hannah Arendt’s Politics of Invisibility”
Rachel Blumenthal, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, “Home to Home: Exiles and Refugees Before the House Un-American Activities Committee”

12:45-2:00 – Lunch – own arrangements

2:00-3:15 – Panel 5: Exiles and Refugees in New York (Chair: Jörg Thunecke, Westdeutsche Akademie für Kommunikation)
Swen Steinberg, Queens University/Ontario, “Networks of Socialist Refugees in New York: The ‘Right Wing’ Social Democratic Journalist Robert Grötzsch and his ‘Friends’ from Germany”
Lori Gemeiner Bihler, Framingham State University, “A Snapshot of 1930s New York through the Lens of the Exile Press”
Helga Schreckenberger, University of Vermont, “Permanent Exile or New Home? Austrian Exiles in New York”

3:15-3:45 – Coffee break

3:45-4:45 – Panel 6: Exile on Film, From Eggerth to Petzold (Chair: Helga Schreckenberger, University of Vermont)
Frank Stern, University of Vienna, “Framing Exile: The Films of Martha Eggerth BEFORE-DURING-AFTER”
Herwig Lewy, Leipzig University, “Suicide in Transit: Feuchtwanger, Seghers, Petzold”

5:00-6:00 – Invited reading
Anna Funder, Sydney, author of All That I Am (2011) and Stasiland (2003)
in conversation with Benjamin Carter Hett, Hunter College, author of Burning the Reichstag and The Death of Democracy

6:30 pm – Conference dinner

SATURDAY JUNE 1

9:00-10:15 am – Panel 7: Toller’s Final Engagements in New York (Chair: Peter Langelmeyer, Østfold University College)
Irene Zanol, University of Innsbruck, “’Tat und Arbeit, statt Publicity und Träumerei’ – Ernst Toller und die American Guild for German Cultural Freedom”
Lisa Marie Anderson, Hunter College, “Antifascist Activism and Free Speech on Campus: Toller’s Queens College Affair”
Karina von Tippelskirch, Syracuse University, “Ernst Toller at the World Congress of Writers in New York”

10:15-10:30 – Coffee break
10:30-11:30 – Keynote lecture: “What Is an Author Without His Language?”
Kirsten Reimers, Hamburg (introduced by Stefan Neuhaus)

11:40-12:40 – Panel 8: Painters in Exile (Chair: Steffan Davies, University of Bristol)
Aleksandra Idzior, University of the Fraser Valley, “Teresa Zarnower, the Artist Afflicted by War and Exile”
Brian Haman, New Europe College, “Portraits of Artists in Exile: Arthur Kaufmann’s Amerikabild”

1:00-2:00 – Catered lunch

2:00-3:00 – Panel 9: Exile Literature and Film Today (Chair: Andrea Capovilla, University of London)
Britta C. Jung, University College Dublin, “Forced Across and Beyond Borders: Exilic Experiences in Vladimir Vertlib’s Zwischenstationen (1999) and Olga Grjasnowa’s Der Russe ist einer, der Birken liebt (2012)”
Withold Bonner, Tampere University/Finland, “‘Extending the German Past into the Present’: Christian Petzold’s Film Version of Transit by Anna Seghers”

3:00-3:30 – Screening and discussion of JR’s short film Ellis (2015)

3:30-4:30 – Closing roundtable
Moderator: Christiane Schönfeld
Participants:
Michael Lahr, Executive Director, The Lahr von Leitis Academy & Archive and Program Director, Elysium – between two continents
Thedel von Wallmoden, Publisher, Wallstein Verlag
Keynote speakers Stefan Neuhaus, Kirsten Reimers, Deborah Vietor-Engländer
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