

# THE GOOD LIFE IN EXILE

## The Life and Work of Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

Facilitators: Professor Katie Peterson and Professor Young Suh

Is the Good Life impossible to find if you're an exile from your homeland? What does it mean to speak when the language you are speaking is not your own?

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha was born in Korea in 1951, the second year of the three year Korean Civil War, a conflict that still divides the country between North and South. She emigrated to the United States in 1962. Her book, *Dictee*, is an artistic response to living as a Korean woman artist in Western culture, when Korea was still struggling to build its own country after 36 year of Japanese occupation and the Korean War. In *Dictee*, Cha juxtaposes poems, historical documents, personal history, and photographs. She uses three different languages: English, Korean, and French. It is a self portrait built from a multiplicity of languages and competing narratives. The book combines Greek mythology, Catholic iconography, and Korean folk ritual - it's a vivid, experimental work that is also very personal.

In this seminar we will discuss writing as an act of speech deeply rooted in personal experience and the historical forces that surround it, and as a struggle to tell a story of inhabiting and surviving in one's own body. We will engage with Cha's book as readers, viewers, and writers. What does the ability to speak about one's life have to do with the Good Life? What does it mean for an exile to find a voice?

## FEBRUARY

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### Public Lecture

Saturday at 10:30am, followed by a lunch reception

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### Visit to Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive

Friday, 1pm-4pm

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### Writing Workshop

Friday, 5:30pm-7pm

For more information and to register for these events, scan the QR code or visit <https://binst.org/the-good-life-in-exile>



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