

SO202 A Lexicon of Migration

Seminar Leader: Agata Lisiak

Course Times: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:45 am-12.15 pm

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Office hours: by appointment

As one of the most important features of today's globalized world, migration remains highly debated on local, national, and international levels. Migration is assigned various meanings and statuses (high-skilled and low-skilled, legal and illegal, documented and undocumented, forced and voluntary, restricted and unrestricted), which are, in turn, contested in multiple ways through grassroots activism, academic and artistic interventions, as well as the work of local and international NGOs. Today, migration affects everyone regardless of their own migratory status, and many contemporary societies – especially but not exclusively their urban centers – have been described as postmigrant or superdiverse. The course critically explores migration from global and local perspectives, emphasizing the postcolonial and neocolonial power geometries that produce specific forms of mobility. Drawing on a range of primary texts (UN documents, first-person narratives, poetry) and analytical contributions from migration studies, cultural studies, anthropology, urban sociology, human geography, and philosophy, students will examine diverse social experiences of migration, as well as a range of related concepts such as belonging, border, citizenship, and solidarity, among others. The in-class discussions, guest lectures, off-campus visits, as well as group and individual assignments aim at deepening students' understanding of migration regimes, migration discourses, and migrant infrastructures in various geographical and historical contexts. Designed by scholars and educators from across the Bard International Network (AlQuds University in Palestine, American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan, Bard College in the United States, Bard College Berlin in Germany), as well as faculty and students from the Mellon-funded Consortium on Forced Migration, Displacement, and Education (Vassar College, Sarah Lawrence College, Bennington College, Bard College, and Bard College Berlin), the course aims at advancing students' understanding of migration both in the specific local contexts in which they study, as well as from international perspectives. Through a series of joint assignments, students will have a unique opportunity to engage with their peers and professors from other campuses.

Requirements

Attendance and participation

Your preparation for class, attendance, and participation are crucial. Please complete the required readings, do your homework, be on time for each class, and contribute regularly to the discussions. Please consult the Student Handbook for BCB's policy on absences and notify me in advance when you know you will miss a class. Attendance and participation make up 30% of the final grade. A self-assessment rubric will be distributed in class and completed at the end of the semester.

COVID-19 provisions

In Spring 2021, some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. Also, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill or exhibit any symptoms linked to COVID-19. Hence, the assignments for this course are conceived in a way that allows all students to complete them remotely. More details on the specific format of each session will be shared via email on a weekly basis to accommodate any changes that may occur.

Readings

All the readings will be available via **Google Classroom**. You will also need to purchase your own copy of **Valeria Luiselli's *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions*** (2017). On a weekly basis, you will be expected to devote about four hours to complete all the readings. As you read the assigned texts, please remember to annotate them: write down questions, comments, observations – we will use them as a basis for our class discussions. I recommend you buy a paper notebook for this course so that all your comments and questions are kept in one place. Please note that several of the readings (marked red in the syllabus) will be shared across the Bard network campuses taking part in this co-taught course initiative.

Assignments

Several assignments will add up to your final grade for this class alongside your participation grade: 1) an image assignment (10%); 2) a keyword (20%); 3) a cross-campus peer review (10%) 4) a 3000-word academic essay or a sound project (30%). Most of the assignments will be developed in several stages, allowing you to revise your and your peers' work. The deadlines for the network assignments will be announced at the beginning of the semester. Please make sure to check Google Classroom regularly for the in-between deadlines and details regarding the assignments. You will receive grading criteria for each assignment separately.

Policy on Plagiarism and Late Submission of Papers

As specified in The Student Handbook, "Bard College Berlin students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of integrity and intellectual engagement in their academic work. Attendance and thorough preparation for class, as well as commitment to the pursuit of excellence in written work, are fundamental requirements of Bard College Berlin's programs." Acts of academic misconduct (plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating) will be reported and result in a disciplinary process (please see the Student Handbook for more details).

Assignments that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. If I agree to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade higher than a C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown and Final Deadlines

Class participation: 30%
Assignment 1 (image response): 10% // TBA
Assignment 2 (keyword): 20% // TBA
Assignment 3 (peer review): 10% // TBA
Assignment 4 (final paper or sound project): 30% // 11 May

ASSIGNMENT 1a: Find an image that depicts or engages with migration and post it on the padlet in the BCB column by **28 January**. Please caption the image, write a 500-word explanation how it engages with migration, and add three hashtags. If you are not the author of the image, make sure to mention its source and author.

For our first session, please prepare to briefly (3 min) present your chosen image in relation to one or both of the texts assigned for 1 February.

Week 1: The Worlds of Migration

1 February

- Hegde, Radha S. 2016. *Mediating Migration*. Cambridge: Polity. Excerpt.
- Mitchell, WJT. 2012. Migration, Law, and the Image: Beyond the Veil of Ignorance. In: *Seeing Through Race*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 126-148.
- Cole, Teju. 2019. A Crime Scene at the Border. *The New York Times*.

3 February

- Massey, Doreen. 1996. Places and Their Pasts.
- Mayblin, Lucy and Joe Turner. 2020. *Migration Studies and Colonialism*. Chapter 3.

Week 2: Categorical Fetishism

8 February

- Crawley, Heaven and Dimitris Skleparis. 2018. Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44:1, 48-64.
- Dhaliwal, Sukhwant and Kirsten Forkert. 2016. Deserving and undeserving migrants. *Soundings* 61: 49-61.

ASSIGNMENT 1b: Please look at the images AQB students posted on the padlet and read their short statements. Make sure to take notes or offer comments/add hashtags directly on the padlet.

10 February

JOINT SESSION WITH AQB (TBC)

Week 3: Forced Displacement and Refugees

15 February

- [The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [UNHCR Forced Displacement in 2019 \(Global Trends Report\)](#)
- Nof Nasser-Eddin and Nour Abu-Assab in Conversation. 2020. "Decolonial Approaches to Refugee Migration." *Migration and Society*.
- What should we call people who migrate because of climate-related reasons? *Migration Matters* 2020:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I99hQr8gMjU&feature=emb_logo

ASSIGNMENT 1c: Revise your original 500-word statement to an 800-word text and upload it to Google Classroom by 18 February. Please see the assignment prompt for more details and grading criteria.

17 February

- Malkki, Liisa. 1996. Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization. *Cultural Anthropology* 11.3: 377-404.
- Farah, Reem. 2020. Expat, Local, and Refugee: "Studying Up" the Global Division of Labor and Mobility in the Humanitarian Industry in Jordan. *Migration and Society*.
- Fiddian-Quasmiyeh, Elena. [Representations of Displacement Series](#). *Refugee Hosts*. 2017.

Week 4: Keywords of Migration, Part 1

22 February

- Arendt, Hannah. 1943. We, Refugees. *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*. Ed. Marc Robinson. Boston: Faber & Faber, 110-119.
- Said, Edward. 2000. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Harvard UP,
- Nayeri, Dina. 2017. [The Ungrateful Refugee: We Have No Debt to Repay](#). *The Guardian*.

HOMEWORK: Having read and discussed Dina Nayeri's essay, what questions would you like to ask her in preparation for her guest talk next week? Please see the assignment prompt for more details and post your question on the padlet by 24 February.

24 February

- Williams, Raymond. 1983. *Culture. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Casas-Cortes, Maribel et al. 2015. "New Keywords: Migration and Borders." *Cultural Studies* 29(1): 55-87. (Selection)
- Campus in Camps. Citizenship. 2013: <http://www.campusincamps.ps/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/citizenship.pdf>

ASSIGNMENT 2a: Pick three keywords from the keywords of migration pool created by faculty and/or add different keywords. Please email your selected keywords to me by **26 February** specifying your first, second, and third choices.

Week 5: Keywords of Migration, Part 2

1 March

Guest lecture by **Dina Nayeri** (starting 1 pm)

3 March

Keywords workshop (TBC)

ASSIGNMENT 2b: Please get in touch with your assigned partner from AQB and start working on your keyword. Your professors will share a google doc with you, which you should use for this assignment. You will also receive a handout that will help you structure your work. Your keywords draft is due by **10 March**.

Week 6: Borders – what’s up with them? Part 1

8 March

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY / PUBLIC HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

10 March

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 2012 (1987). *The Homeland. Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Luiselli, Valeria. 2017. *Tell Me How It Ends*.

Week 7: The Coloniality of Migration

15 March

KEYWORD PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP

In preparation for this session, please read all the keyword drafts and prepare your comments according to the handout you will receive.

ASSIGNMENT 2c: Please consider the feedback you received on your keyword during today’s workshop and make an appointment with your assigned partner to revise it. The keyword assignment is due on **22 March**.

17 March

- Rodney, Walter. 1972. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Verso. Excerpts.
- Hansen, Peo and Stefan Jonsson. 2011. Demographic Colonialism: EU–African Migration Management and the Legacy of Eurafrika. *Globalizations* 8.3: 261-276.

Week 8: Borders – what’s up with them? Part 2

22 March

- deGenova, Nicholas. 2017. Introduction to *The Borders of “Europe” and the European Question*. Durham: Duke UP. 1-24.
- Crawley, Heaven, et al. 2017. *Unravelling Europe’s ‘Migration Crisis’: Journeys over land and sea*. Bristol: Policy Press. Excerpts.

24 March

- Walia, Harsha. 2013. What Is Border Imperialism? *Undoing Border Colonialism*.
- Mac, Juno and Molly Smith. 2018. *Borders. Revolting Prostitutes: The Fight for Sex Workers' Rights*. London: Verso.
- Young, Gary. 2017. End all immigration controls.
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/16/end-immigration-controls-money-people-barriers>.

SPRING BREAK & FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

Week 9: Conversations about Home, Part 1

7 April

- Masalha, Nur. 2018. Decolonizing methodology, reclaiming memory: Palestinian oral histories and memories of the Nakba. *An Oral History of the Palestinian Nakba*. Eds. Nahla Abdo and Nur Masalha. London: Zed Books.
- Bhan, Mona, Haley Duschinski, and Ather Zia. 2018. “*Rebels of the Streets*”: *Violence, Protest, and Freedom in Kashmir Resisting Occupation in Kashmir*. Edited by Haley Duschinski, Mona Bhan, Ather Zia, and Cynthia Mahmood.
- Tanya Habjouqa. *Occupied Pleasures*: <http://tanyahabjouqa.com/occupied-pleasures>.
- *Voices: Palestinian Women Narrate Displacement*:
<http://almashriq.hiof.no/palestine/300/301/voices/index2.html>.

Week 10: Conversations about Home, Part 2

12 April

Guest lecture TBC

14 April

A SOUND WORKSHOP, FIRST IDEAS FOR SOUND PROJECTS AND/OR FINAL PAPERS.

<p>Assignment 3a: Please write a 300-500 word abstract presenting your sound project/final paper ideas including a works cited and email it to me by 19 April.</p>
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Week 11: Migration and Ordinary Cities, Part 1

19 April

- Simone, AbdouMaliq. 2004. People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg. *Public Culture*, 16(3): 407-429.
- Amin, Ash. 2013. *Land of Strangers*. Cambridge: Polity. Excerpts.

21 April

- Muniandy, Parthiban. 2018. From the pasar to the mamak stall: refugees and migrants as surplus ghost labor in Malaysia’s food service industry. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- Haid, Christian. 2016. The Janus face of urban governance: State, informality and ambiguity in Berlin. *Current Sociology*.

Assignment 3b: Please review your peers' abstracts according to the handout you will receive. Please email your peer review to me by **23 April** and prepare to discuss your peers' projects on 26 April.

Week 12: Migration and the Pandemic

26 April

CROSS-NETWORK PEER-REVIEW SESSION

During this session you will be working in small groups to offer each other feedback on final papers/sound project ideas.

Assignment 4: Please closely consider the feedback you received on your final project/paper abstract and continue working on it according to the guidelines you have received. The final project/paper is due on **10 May**.

28 April

Migration, refugees, and COVID

Listen to IWS Radio: Life in the *Lagers* during the Corona Pandemic <https://iwspace.de/2020/07/iws-radio-01/> and the first-person reports on the situation in the *Lagers* in Germany during the pandemic: <https://iwspace.de/2020/10/lager-reports-october-2020/>.

Interactive timeline of the Moria fire: <https://www.borderviolence.eu/interactive-timeline-on-the-moria-fire/>

Guest lecture TBC

Week 13: Migration and Ordinary Cities, Part 2

3 May

- Home Cooking with Samin Nosrat and Hrishikesh Hirway. Episode 4: Guess What? Chicken Butt Is Delicious (with Yo-Yo Ma) <https://homecooking.show/episodes/4>
- Lemon, Robert. *The Taco Truck: How Mexican Street Food Is Transforming the American City*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2019. Excerpts.
- Hemon, Aleksandar. 2019. 'Bread is practically sacred': how the taste of home sustained my refugee parents. *The Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/food/2019/jun/13/bread-is-practically-sacred-how-the-taste-of-home-sustained-my-refugee-parents>

5 May

- Migration and food performance by [Pepe Dayaw](#) (TBC – this may have to happen on a weekend/in the evening)

Week 14: Conversations about Home, Part 3

10 May

- Shire, Warsan. 2011. Conversations about Home. *Teaching My Mother How To Give Birth*.
- Doshi, Tishani. 2018. Grandmothers. *Girls Are Coming Out of the Woods*. Bloodaxe Books Ltd.
- More poems suggested by students!

12 May

- Concluding reflections and discussion of students' sound projects.