

SO202 A Lexicon of Migration

Seminar Leader: Agata Lisiak

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

Room: TBA

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Office hours: Wednesdays 1-2.30 pm, Thursdays 9-10:30 pm

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. Every three late arrivals to class will count as an absence and missing more than two sessions will affect your participation grade for this class. 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.

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 4 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 podcast project (10%) 4) a 3000-word academic essay (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 (podcast): 10% // TBA
Assignment 4 (final paper): 30% // 11 May

RED – readings and events shared across the Bard International Network

GREEN – events funded by the Consortium on Forced Migration, Displacement, and Education

ASSIGNMENT 1a: Find an image that in your mind depicts or engages with migration. Email the image to me by **24 January** (if you are not the author of this image, make sure to include its source and author). Caption the image, write a 500-word explanation how this image engages with migration, and add 3 hashtags. Prepare to briefly (3 min) present your chosen image in relation to one or both of the texts assigned for 27 January.

Week 1: The Worlds of Migration

27 January

- Hegde, Rahda 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*.

29 January

- Massey, Doreen. 1994. A Global Sense of Place. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Massey, Doreen. 1996. Places and Their Pasts.

Week 2: Categorical Fetishism

3 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.

5 February

- Grzymala-Kazlowska, Aleksandra and Jenny Phillimore. 2018. Introduction: rethinking integration. New perspectives on adaptation and settlement in the era of super-diversity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44.2: 179-196.
- Film screening and discussion.

Week 3: Forced Displacement and Refugees

10 February

- [The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [UNHCR Forced Displacement in 2018 \(Global Trends Report\)](#)
- Berchin, Issa Ibrahim, Isabela Blasi Valduga, Jéssica Garcia, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra (2017) Climate change and forced migrations: An effort towards recognizing climate refugees. *Geoforum* 84: 147-150.

ASSIGNMENT 1b: Revise your original 500-word statement and 3 hashtags and email them to me by 15 February (TBC).

12 February

- Malkki, Liisa. 1996. Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization. *Cultural Anthropology* 11.3: 377-404.
- Fiddian-Quasmiyeh, Elena. [Representations of Displacement Series](#). *Refugee Hosts*. 2017.

Week 4: Keywords of Migration

17 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*.

19 February

- Williams, Raymond. 1983. *Humanity. 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)

ASSIGNMENT 3a: Pick three keywords from the keywords of migration pool created by faculty and/or add different keywords. Submit the selected keywords to your professors, specifying your first, second, and third choices. Date TBA.

Week 5: Borders – what's up with them? Part 1

24 February

- 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.

26 February

- 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>.

ASSIGNMENT 3b: Get in touch with your peers 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. Deadline TBA.

Week 6: Borders – what’s up with them? Part 2

2 March

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 2012 (1987). *The Homeland. Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Saúl A. 2018. “[Documenting the undocumented: how the US-Mexico border shaped my mother’s life.](#)” *Media Diversified*.

4 March

- Luiselli, Valeria. 2017. *Tell Me How It Ends*.

Week 7: The Coloniality of Migration

9 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 Eurafica. *Globalizations* 8.3: 261-276.

11 March

- Guest lecture (TBA)

ASSIGNMENT 3c: For next week’s session, go through all the keywords saved on Google Classroom and think how you would like to arrange them. Bring your ideas to class on **18 March**.

Week 8: Conversations about Home, Part 1

16 March

- 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.
- Gabiam, Nell and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh. 2016. Palestinians and the Arab Uprisings: political activism and narratives of home, homeland, and home-camp. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- Voices: Palestinian Women Narrate Displacement:
<http://almashriq.hiof.no/palestine/300/301/voices/index2.html>.

18 March

Keywords workshop

BCB and AIQuds students discuss how to arrange their keywords. Time for final edits. Deadline for revised keywords TBA.

Week 9: Migration in/and Ordinary Cities, Part 1

23 March

- Simone, AbdouMaliq. 2004. People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg. *Public Culture*, 16(3): 407-429.

25 March

Off-campus visit.

Week 10: Sounds and/of migration

30 March

Sound workshop

- Readings TBA

1 April

Sound workshop

- Readings TBA

SPRING BREAK & FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

Week 11: The Politics of Difference

15 April

- Amin, Ash. 2013. *Land of Strangers*. Cambridge: Polity. Excerpts.
- Pitts, Johnny. 2019. *Afropean*. Excerpts.

Week 12: The Politics of Difference

20 April

- Stella, Francesca, Moya Flynn, and Anna Gawlewicz. 2017. Unpacking the Meanings of a 'Normal Life' Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Eastern European Migrants in Scotland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 7.1: 55-72.
- Murray, David AB. 2014. The (not so) straight story: Queering migration narratives of sexual orientation and gendered identity refugee claimants. *Sexualities* 17.4: 451-471.

22 April

- Museum or theater visit. Readings to be announced.

Week 13: Migration in/and Ordinary Cities, Part 2

27 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. 2013. Contentious Informalities - The Narratives of Picnicking at Berlin's Thai Park. *dérive - Zeitschrift für Stadtforschung*, (51), pp. 43 –48.

29 April

- Guest visit to a Berlin-based migrant organization (tbc)

Week 14: Conversations about Home, Part 2

4 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.
- 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>

6 May
final discussion