

HI255 Research-Creation: (Im-)Materialities of 20th/21st Century “Refugee Protection”

Seminar Leaders: Marion Detjen, Dorothea von Hantelmann

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Course Times: Thu 14:00-17:15, except March 3rd and 17th: 13:00-16:15.

Office Hours: Thu 11:00-13:00 and by appointment (Marion Detjen); Thu 11:00-13:00 and by appointment (Dorothea von Hantelmann)

Course Description

This cross-campus class, taught in collaboration with Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia) and University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, South Africa), explores the way research-based art-making generates new kinds of knowledge about forced migration and displacement as urgent global challenges. Building on a Research-Creation approach to teaching migration history in dialogue with the arts, students will develop individual or collaborative open-media artistic projects relating to the (im-)materialities of the “modern refugee”.

Thematically, the course revolves around the bureaucracies that were created to curb and control migration and to react to asylum claims of those made stateless. They mirror a fundamental dilemma in all attempts to find responses to forced migration, throughout the 20th and 21st Century: On the one hand, nation-states and the international community based on nation-states have forged institutions – legal provisions and procedures, agencies, NGOs etc. – to mitigate, to alleviate, to control and to hedge, even to “solve” the humanitarian, social and political consequences of forced migration. On the other hand, these institutions never intended to address the political causes that produced and to this day produce forced migration in the first place. Not getting at the roots of the underlying political and social problems, the institutions failed to keep the promise that every displaced, stateless person would eventually get on a road to state-citizenship, through integration, repatriation or resettlement. Instead, national and international policies and administrations have been focussing predominantly on combating migration as such, a futile endeavor that leaves a trail of bureaucratic failure in its wake.

The „research“ dimension of the course will enquire the materialities of these trails - lists, papers, forms, stamps, technological devices of all kinds for surveillance and control, and the physical traces of migrants handling of it -, as well as address the immaterialities of increasingly digitized migration regimes. We will read Stuart Hall, Sara Ahmed and Ann Laura Stoler for theoretical grounding, and share lectures and discussion sessions with our partner classes in Bogotá and in Johannesburg. In the „creation“ dimension of the course, research-based artistic projects will be produced. At the end of the

course, these projects will be presented in public exhibitions/events in the three cities (Berlin, Bogota and Johannesburg) and on a common website.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during the entire class and workshop time
- Be prepared to present assignments/presentations without reminder
- Engage in critiques and discussions

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester can significantly affect the participation grade for the course. Please inform us about any potential absence in advance. Please consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence. Tardiness after ten minutes might be considered an absence.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2022: Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Assignments, Assessment, and Grade Breakdown

The experimental character of the class, combining historical research, theoretical readings and artistic work in a cross-campus connected learning environment, requires active participation and a special commitment at the end of the term for setting up a final exhibition project.

Active participation in class discussions and communication with students and professors will make up **40%** of your grade: 20% first half of the semester / 20% second half of the semester.

There will be reading assignments and two asynchronous lectures over the first half of the semester. The texts and lectures will be uploaded on Brightspace, the learning platform of the cross-campus class. Four of the readings/lectures (Mbembe, Ahmed, Stoler, Hall) will be connected to a writing assignment: a short response paper (ca. 500 words) to be uploaded on Brightspace. **These four papers will be graded: 5% of your grade each. Together they will replace the Midterm exam.** They are due on Feb. 22, March 1, and March 9.

Your main contribution will be your **final artistic project**, accompanied by a brief exhibition text (ca. 100 words). Your work will be presented both in physical exhibitions and on a Website, and it is your responsibility to provide all the materials in a suitable form in time. The exhibition in Berlin will be around May 12/13/14. The final project will be **40% of your grade**.

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments (artworks, essays, performances, oral presentations) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). The Professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where a Professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Grade Breakdown

Class participation (includes attendance, maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production / rehearsal, communication with Professor and other students): 40%

Response papers: 20%

Final Project, including the exhibition text and the presentation in the exhibition and on the website: 40%

Schedule

Spring classes start on Monday, January 31 and run until Friday, May 20, with spring break planned from April 11 – April 18. Completion week is from May 16 through May 20. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/>

Week 1: Feb 3, 14:00-17:15

Part I, 14:00-15:30 „Refugees Protection“ and the International Order (I)

Media Sources to be watched (critically!!):

- On the current EU migration crisis at the Belarussian-Polish border:

<https://www.dw.com/en/the-eu-migrant-crisis-along-the-belarus-poland-border/av-60029654>;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCWClVh9Tis>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQb7fF47kll>;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKWAP8NtjUc>

- Professor Paul Collier of Oxford University: “Why the Refugee System is Broken and how to Transform it”, Talk at “Agenda Austria”, Nov 29, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99RkOfE2KtM>

Part II, 15:45- 17:15 Introduction to Artistic Research

Anri Sala, *Intervista* (Finding the Words)

Week 2: Feb 10, 14:00-17:15

Part 1, 14:00-15:30: “Refugee Protection” and the International Order (2)

Poetry and Legal Sources:

- Leigh Ronen: “I will tell you all this now”: <https://chimes-fiddle-xph9.squarespace.com/leigh-ronen> (password: bard)

- Bertholt Brecht: Poem “In view of the circumstances in this city”; passage from “Refugee Conversations” (both uploaded on Brightspace)

- Excerpts from Geneva Refugee Convention, 1951 (uploaded on Brightspace)

- Federal German Asylum Act, 2008:

https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_asylvfg/englisch_asylvfg.html#p0024 (just glance over it)

Part II, 15:45-17.15

15:45 AV-Intro with Janina Schabig

16:15-17.15 Presentation and discussion of artistic research projects from previous classes

Week 3: Feb 17, 14:00-17:15

Part 1, 14:00-15:30: “Refugee Protection” and the International Order (3)

Political science/history articles:

- Olivia Nantermoz (2020), “International refugee protection and the primary institutions of international society”, in: *Review of International Studies*, 46(2), 256-277 (uploaded on Brightspace)

- Optional: Peter Gatrell (2013), *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, Introduction and Chapter 3, 85-117 (uploaded on Brightspace)

Part II, 15:45-17.15

To Do: Bring an image, a story, a song, an object that could become a starting point for a (research) project.

Week 4: Feb 24, 14:00-17:15

Part 1, 14:00-15:30: Theories and Metaphors (1)

Ruins of Modernity/Ruins of Imperialism

Read:

- Ann Laura Stoler (2008): “Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination”, *Cultural Anthropology* 23(2), 191-219 (uploaded on Brightspace)
- Poems/literary texts by Franz Kafka and Erich Fried; a passage from the Arcades Project by Walter Benjamin (all uploaded on Brightspace)

Discussion of artistic references

Part 2, 15:45-17.15 first presentation of draft project ideas

Week 5: March 3, 13:00- 16.15

13:00 - 16.15: joint online cross-campus-class with Uni Andes (Bogotá) and WITS (Jo'burg)

Recap Stoler

Artist presentation and discussion

Week 6: March 10, 14:00- 17.15

14:00 - 17.15: Theories and Metaphors (2)

Home, Estrangement, and Diaspora

Read:

- Sara Ahmed (1999): “Home and Away. Narratives of Migration and Estrangement”, *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 2(3), 329-347.
- Excerpts from Stuart Hall (2017/1994): “Nations and Diasporas”, in: *The Fateful Triangle. Race, Ethnicity, Nation*, Cambridge/Mass: Harvard University Press, 125-174.

Attention: 19:00-21:00 Artist Talk with meLê yamomo

Week 7: March 17, 13:00- 16.15

13:00 - 16.15 joint online cross-campus-class with Uni Andes (Bogotá) and WITS (Jo'burg)

Recap Ahmed and Hall

Artist presentation and discussion

Week 8: March 24, 14:00 - 17.15

No class (Individual project meetings)

Week 9: March 31, 14:00 - 17.15

14:00 - 17.15 Visit to Kunst-Werke (exhibitions of Oraib Toukan and Rabih Mroué)

Week 10: April 7, 14:00 - 17.15

Part 1, 14:00 - 15.30 (Individual project meetings tbc)

Part 2, 15.45 - 17.15

Exhibition subject and title: brainstorming and discussion

Spring Break: [Apr 11 – Apr 18]

Week 11: April 21, 14:00 - 17.15

Part 1, 14:00 - 15.30: joint online cross-campus-class with Uni Andes (Bogotá) and WITS (Jo'burg)

Cross-campus presentation of individual artistic projects

Part 2, 15.45 - 17.15:

Discussion of the projects' discursive and epistemological potential

Week 12: April 28, 14:00 - 17.15

14:00 - 17.15 site visit, curation planning (with Joon Park and Janina Schabig)

Week 13: May 5, 14:00 - 17.15

Part 1, 14:00 - 15.30 joint online cross-campus-class with Uni Andes (Bogotá) and WITS (Jo'burg)

Cross-campus discussion of the multi-site exhibition

Part 2, 15.45 - 17.15 final edits and feedback on final projects and exhibition texts

Week 14: May 12, 14:00 - 17.15

Exhibition install (and de-install)

Facility Guidelines:

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

The Factory Policy Agreement

- 1) “The Factory” at BCB (Eichenstrasse 43) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Mandatory in-class orientations are required to retain chip access to the Factory. Chip access to The Factory is from 7am to 10pm everyday during the semester. At 10pm students will be asked to leave the building by BCB security personnel.
- 2) Students agree to only use the common spaces that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits. For requesting to reserve the dance / theater space and / or Seminar Room 6, please fill out the online [Factory Reservation Form](#). The Factory Staff will get back to you within two weekdays. (Monday - Friday).
- 3) No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the building. There are to be no projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) inside any part of the building.
- 4) Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
- 5) Spray painting and handling of any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not allowed inside the building. Contact the Studio Arts Manager concerning working with these materials. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be properly protected with a drop cloth or a packing paper provided by the workshop.
- 6) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside the workshop and studio 6.
- 7) Students must make sure all lights are turned off and doors are closed when leaving the building. No windows or doors are to be left opened or cracked. All electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.
- 8) If BCB workshop tools must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, please contact The Studio Arts Manager (by appointment).
- 9) There are to be no architectural changes to studios or any areas inside or outside of the building without first speaking with the Studio Arts Manager.
- 10) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged (or boxed) and properly disposed of. Final grades may be penalized and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 11) Contact Studio Arts Manager directly with any questions: j.park@berlin.bard.edu

AV Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

- 1) BCB’s AV (Audio / Visual) facilities provide a limited quantity of AV equipment to support Admin, Faculty as well as those students enrolled in arts classes that require specific items. AV facilities do not include any black and white or color printing services for students.
- 2) The opening times may change every semester to adapt to specific course times and social distancing conditions. Borrowing equipment is currently implemented by scheduling an advance appointment through this link: <https://janinaschabig.youcanbook.me/> AV facilities are ONLY available during days when classes are held (closed during official BCB holidays).

- 3) All items checked out are due back during AV hours the following day, unless other arrangements have been made in advance directly with AV Staff.
- 4) Items to be reserved on a specific date should be requested at least one week in advance. Without reservation, availability is limited to a first-come, first-serve basis.
- 5) The AV Staff may exclude students from borrowing items at any time, if the student:
 - failed to return items in time
 - failed to return items in person (pick up and/ or return by friends is not allowed)
 - returned items with missing pieces
 - returned items damaged or in poor shape
- 6) AV equipment will be given out only to those students responsible in organizing, picking up as well as returning their items IN PERSON. No exceptions.
- 7) All items returned late, regardless of patron's position at BCB, will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day.
- 8) Any item returned without accessories (such as cables, SD card, batteries, tripod head, lens cap, etc) will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day (the same as late returns).
- 9) Any items missing will be subject to patron reimbursement for its value (or under special circumstances, replacement, at the discretion of AV Staff). Any items damaged or malfunctioning are expected to be reported to Staff upon check-in.
- 10) Please use the AV email to inquire about equipment or policy, as well as to reserve (av@berlin.bard.edu). Do not contact AV Staff through their personal emails.
- 11) We strongly suggest personally visiting the facilities to inquire and reserve before borrowing equipment!
- 12) AV equipment is limited at BCB. Whenever possible students are encouraged to use their own devices (computers, cameras) for production purposes.
- 13) Contact AV Staff directly with any questions: av@berlin.bard.edu

Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (first floor)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.