

# SO285 MIGRATION, SPACE, AND POWER

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## Course Description

This course is an invitation to radically rethink migration with the help of two exceptional scholars, teachers, and activists: Rosa Luxemburg and Doreen Massey. Both Luxemburg and Massey were economic thinkers who made long-lasting contributions to their respective disciplines, shaped the political movements they supported, and inspired new generations of scholars and activists. Both were staunch supporters of internationalism and critics of global capitalism. Both conducted research on and advocated for workers' rights, and both left behind incisive reflections on the potential of solidarity. Rejecting neat, linear theories of development, both also repudiated binary models that juxtaposed the west and the rest, reform and revolution, global and local. Last but not least, both were women in spaces coded masculine – women who refused to conform to the heteropatriarchal gender norms of their social worlds. Considering that “there is no capitalism without migration” (Casas-Cortes et al. 2015), Luxemburg’s and Massey’s critiques of capitalism yield inspiring insights on migration because they engage with political and economic dependencies, colonial legacies, and what Massey called *power geometry*: the uneven positioning of different individuals and different groups within the global interconnectedness. In dialog with Massey’s notion of a global sense of place, Luxemburg’s theory of the accumulation of capital can help us reframe the sticky connections between migration and capitalism in its current neoliberal guise. Following Massey’s observation that “mobility, and control over mobility, both reflects and reinforces power” and Luxemburg’s insistence that we consider inequality globally and not just locally, we will examine the wide-reaching consequences of capitalism’s expansion into social activities hitherto unclaimed by the market as well as its enduring impact on both lived realities and popular perceptions of migration. In addition to selected texts by Luxemburg and Massey, we will also read a range of complimentary writings on migration, space, and power by Gargi Bhattacharyya, Avtar Brah, Stuart Hall, Katherine McKittrick, Walter Rodney, Edward Said, Harsha Walia, and Lea Ypi, among others.

## Requirements

### 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 a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses should not affect the participation grade or require documentation. Students must not attend class if they test positive for COVID-19. Please inform me in advance if you know you will be missing a session. 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. Last but not least, it is crucial that you arrive on time as tardiness leads to disruption, unnecessary repetitions, and takes valuable time away from what could be inspiring and engaging discussions. Being late to class three times will count as one absence.

### Assessment

Your performance in this course will be assessed based on your assignments (see below) and your preparedness for and participation in class. Please see the rubrics for each assignment at the end of this syllabus to understand the grading approach and contact me if you have any questions or concerns. If you find it hard to participate in class discussions or find certain topics upsetting, please let me know in advance and we will try to jointly work out an approach that accommodates your needs. If you find yourself struggling with the course at any moment, don't hesitate get in touch to talk about it.

I recommend that – in addition to the feedback you receive from me on your written assignments – you visit BCB's Learning Commons to develop your writing skills.

### Assignments

This course includes three types of assignments. The assignments are marked red in the syllabus and will also be posted on google classroom:

**Short responses and comments:** In the course of the semester and in response to the assigned readings and podcast episodes, you will be asked to respond briefly (300-500 words per response) to three questions that emerge from or relate to said readings. The point of this assignment is to ensure you engage meaningfully with the course material on a regular basis, to learn and remember more than you otherwise would, to identify thematic areas of special interest, and to address any potential challenges or misunderstandings. These responses will be shared openly with your classmates via a course padlet and you will be asked to comment on at least two other responses (per assignment). The deadlines for each of the short three responses are included in the course schedule (below) and will be additionally communicated via google classroom and padlet.

**Midterm exam:** This 90-minute open-book exam, scheduled for **20 March 2023, 9-10:30 am**, will consist of three questions assessing your familiarity with some of the key concepts discussed in the first seven weeks of the semester and your ability to use them to engage critically with questions concerning the politics of space. You will be able to consult your notes and the course readings during the exam.

**Final essay:** This 3000-word essay in response to one of three prompts engaging with the key topics, questions, and concepts discussed in this course. You will workshop your essay drafts with your peers in class and you can also, upon request and appointment, discuss them individually with me. The deadline for this assignment is **midnight 10 May 2023**.

**Readings:** Many of the readings for this course will be available as PDFs or web links via google classroom. While some texts written by Rosa Luxemburg and Doreen Massey are available for free online, I recommend that you purchase the following books:

- *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader* edited by Peter Hudis and Kevin B. Anderson, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2004.
- *Doreen Massey Selected Political Writings* edited by David Featherstone and Diarmaid Kelliher, London: Lawrence Wishart, 2022.

### Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. 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 essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours. Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### Grade Breakdown

Seminar preparation and classroom participation - 30% (15% for weeks 1-8 and 15% for weeks 9-14)  
Short responses – 15% (5% per assignment)  
Midterm exam – 25%  
Final essay – 30%


### Schedule

#### Week 1

##### Monday, 30 January

Introductions and opening exercises

##### Wednesday, 1 February

 Listen to [Spatial Delight](#) Episodes 1 (Full of Power) & 2 (Geography Matters!)

 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage, 1994, 1-15.

#### Week 2

##### Monday, 6 February

 Doreen Massey, "The Shape of the World" from *Geographical Worlds*, 1995.

 Doreen Massey, Chapter 11: Slices Through Space, *For Space*, 2005. 105-125.

#### \*\*\* Short response 1 \*\*\*

Having listened to *Spatial Delight* and based on Doreen Massey's texts you have read so far, please post a short (300 words) response to the prompt featured on the padlet (link on google classroom). Engage with at least two other response papers on the padlet by offering your comments or questions. Deadline for short response: midnight 7 February. Deadline for comments: midnight 9 February.

##### Wednesday, 8 February

 Doreen Massey, Setting the Scene & Opening Propositions, *For Space*, 2005, 1-15.

 Stuart Hall, The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power, 1992, excerpt.

#### Week 3

##### Monday, 13 February – CLASS ON ZOOM

 Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner, Time and Space, *Migration Studies and Colonialism*, 2021, 26-48.

 Harsha Walia, *Undoing Border Colonialism*, 2013, excerpt.

### Wednesday, 15 February

📖 Evyn Lê Espiritu Gandhi, Introduction, *Archipelago of Resettlement*, 2022.

📖 Craig Santos Perez, *Interwoven*, 2018.

🎧 Listen to [Evyn Lê Espiritu Gandhi speak](#) about Vietnamese “refugee settlers” in Guǎhan and Palestine, *The Funambulist*, 2022.

🎧 Listen to [Zoé Samudzi speak](#) about anticolonial solidarities and reparative futurities, *The Funambulist*, 2020.

### Week 4

#### Monday, 20 February

🎧 Listen to two podcast episodes about Rosa Luxemburg’s life and work, one with Agata Lisiak from [The Dead Ladies Show](#), 2022 and one with Lea Ypi from [Jacobin](#), 2021.

📖 Read selected 1899 letters from *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader* (pages 380-4)

📖 Optional readings:

Lea Ypi on Rosa Luxemburg in the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#), 2022, and in [Jacobin](#), 2019.

### \*\*\* Short response 2 \*\*\*

Please post a short (300 words) response to the prompt featured on the padlet (link on google classroom). Engage with at least two other response papers on the padlet by offering your comments or questions. Deadline for short response: midnight 20 February. Deadline for comments: midnight 23 February.

### Wednesday, 22 February

📖 Rosa Luxemburg, Slavery, 1907[?] (*Reader* 111-122)

📖 Walter Rodney, Africa’s Contribution to European Capitalist Development – The Pre-Colonial Period, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 1972.

👁️ Gurminder Bhambra, [Legacy of Empire](#), 2020.

### Week 5

#### Monday, 27 February

📖 Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, Chapters 26 & 30, 1913.

📖 Gargi Bhattacharyya, Ten Theses on Racial Capitalism, *Rethinking Racial Capitalism*, 2018.

🎧 Optional: listen to [David Harvey on Marx’s Capital](#), *The Dig*, 2018.

### Wednesday, 1 March

📖 Rosa Luxemburg, Martinique, 1902 (*Reader* 123-5)

📖 Rosa Luxemburg, The Junius Pamphlet, 1915 (*Reader* 312-341)

📖 Dan Hicks, World War Zero, *The British Museums*, 2020.



### 🎉 Sunday, 5 March, 2 pm // Rosa Luxemburg’s birthday 🎉

A Rosa Luxemburg walking tour of Berlin and birthday cake! Meeting point: U2 Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz.

📖 Readings in preparation for the tour available on google classroom.

Week 6

**Monday, 6 March**

-  Rosa Luxemburg, [The Polish Question and the Socialist Movement](#), 1905.
-  Avtar Brah, *Decolonial Imagining, Intersectional Conversations*, 2022, Chapter 3.



**Wednesday, 8 March NO CLASS – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY**

Optional readings:



-  Rosa Luxemburg, Writings on Women, 1902-1914 (*Reader* 232-245)
-  Linda McDowell and Doreen Massey, A Woman’s Place? 1984.
-  Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, 1992.


Week 7

**Monday, 13 March**

-  Doreen Massey, A Global Sense of Place, 1991 (*Selected Political Writings*, 151-163).
-  Katherine McKittrick, On Plantations, Prisons, and a Black Sense of Place, *Social & Cultural Geography* 12.8 (2011).

**Wednesday, 15 March**

-  Doreen Massey, Making Spaces Or, Geography Is Political Too, *Soundings* 1 (1995).
-  Gracie Mae Bradley and Luke de Noronha, *Against Borders: The Case for Abolition*, 2022, excerpt.



 In-class revision in preparation for the midterm exam

Week 8

**Monday, 20 March**

 Midterm exam

**Wednesday, 22 March**




-  Doreen Massey, Places and Their Pasts, 1995 (*Selected Political Writings*, 164-177).
-  Doreen Massey, [Mexico City](#), BBC2 documentary, 1999.

Week 9

**Monday, 27 March**

 Guest speaker TBC

**Wednesday, 29 March**

-  Doreen Massey, *World City*, London: Polity, 2007, 165-187.
-  Listen to [Spatial Delight](#) Episode 3 (World City)
-  Listen to Surviving Society presents [Material Crimes](#) Episode 2 (A Very British Massacre)

Week 10 – SPRING BREAK




Week 11

**Monday, 10 April** – NO CLASS (PUBLIC HOLIDAY/EASTER MONDAY)

**Wednesday, 12 April** – NO CLASS (this makes up for the extra session on 5 March)

Week 12

**Monday, 17 April**

-  Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, 1918 (*Reader* 281-310).
-  Doreen Massey, *The Geography of Power*, 2000 (*Selected Political Writings*, 178-184).
-  Doreen Massey, *Learning from Latin America*, 2012 (*Selected Political Writings*, 214-224).

**Wednesday, 19 April**

-  Rosa Luxemburg, *What Does the Spartacus League Want?* 1918 (*Reader* 349-357)
-  Doreen Massey, Stuart Hall, Michael Rustin, [Kilburn Manifesto](#), 2015.

**\*\*\* Short response 3 \*\*\***

Engage with at least two other response papers on the padlet by offering your comments or questions. Deadline for short response: midnight 19 April. Deadline for comments: midnight 21 April. Padlet link on google classroom.

Week 13

**Monday, 24 April**

-  Nicholas de Genova, *The “Migrant Crisis” As Racial Crisis: Do Black Lives Matter In Europe?* *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41.10 (2018): 1765-1782.
-  Gargi Bhattacharyya, *Rethinking Racial Capitalism*, 2018, Chapter 5.

**\*\*\* Final essay abstract (300 words) due midnight 24 April \*\*\***

**Wednesday, 26 April**



-  In-class workshop: final project abstracts

Week 14

**Monday, 1 May – NO CLASS / INTERNATIONAL LABOR DAY**

-  Optional readings available on google classroom.

**Wednesday, 3 May**

-  Rosa Luxemburg, *Order Reigns in Berlin*, 1919 (*Reader* 373-78).
-  Doreen Massey, *Vocabularies of the Economy*, 2013 (*Selected Political Writings*, 83-96).

Week 15

**Monday, 8 May**

-  A lecture on Europe's borders

**Wednesday, 10 May**

Wrap-up session

**\*\*\* Final essay due midnight 10 May \*\*\***

## RUBRICS

### **Preparedness and participation rubric**

A = You attend class regularly and on time. You consistently engage in the course work including reading, listening, and taking notes. You participate in class discussions respectfully and in meaningful ways, listen carefully to others, offer thoughtful questions and comments, engage with what your peers say, and contribute to a good learning environment.

B = You attend class regularly, but are sometimes late and sometimes come unprepared (without having done all the readings carefully). Your participation in class discussions and engagement with your peers could be stronger.

C = You do not attend class regularly and are repeatedly late. You are often unprepared and fail to engage with your peers' contributions in respectful and serious ways.

D = You have missed more than 25% of all classes, are repeatedly unprepared, and do not engage with your peers' contributions.

F = You have missed more than 30% and/or are consistently unprepared and disengaged, your behavior is disruptive and negatively affects your peers' learning experience.

### **Short responses and comments rubric**

A = You engage carefully with the assigned readings and offer a well-structured and thoughtful response. You ran a spellcheck and edited your response before uploading it to the padlet. You seriously engage with your peers' responses on the padlet and provide at least two considerate comments or questions.

B = You did the assigned readings, but your response engages with them only superficially. Your response could use another edit and/or spellcheck. Your responses to your peers' contributions on the padlet lack serious engagement.

C = You did the assigned readings, but your response engages with them only superficially. You did not engage with your peers' responses on the padlet.

D = Your response has no connection to the assigned readings and your comments on your peers' responses demonstrates you did not read them carefully.

F = You did not submit your short response and did not comment on your peers' contributions.

### **Midterm rubric**

A = The exam demonstrates your full command of the material and reflects in-depth engagement with the readings. Excellent work!

B = The exam demonstrates your general familiarity with the material and some engagement with the readings, but lacks critical engagement and close reading of the texts.

C = The exam demonstrates your selective familiarity with the material; it contains misreadings or gaps in understanding of the texts that have been discussed in class.

D = The exam demonstrates your lack of engagement with the readings and lack of familiarity with the key concepts discussed in class.

F = The exam demonstrates your unfamiliarity with basic concepts discussed in class and/or fails to adhere to the academic standards as set out in the Student Handbook.

### **Final essay rubric**

A = The essay demonstrates a full command of the material, reflects your in-depth engagement with the selected readings, clear and compelling thinking, and skillful writing.

B = The essay has a solid, consistent focus and demonstrates clear argumentation, but some paragraphs are not fully developed and at times the paper doesn't quite know why it does what it does. The paper contains occasional stylistic, grammatical, and spelling mistakes.

C = The paper fulfills the minimum required by the assignment. It might lack skillful argumentation, offer irrelevant evidence, and rely on generalities (and generalizations), but shows basic understanding of the material. The paper contains multiple stylistic, grammatical, and spelling mistakes.

D = Major deficiencies in writing and argumentation, the paragraphs are not logically organized, and the paper lacks overall cohesion.

F = Unacceptable, fails to follow the basic points of the assignment and/or fails to adhere to the academic standards as set out in the Student Handbook.