

S0202 A Lexicon of Migration

Seminar Leader: Agata Lisiak

Course Times: Mon & Wed, 10:45 am-12.15 pm

Room: TBA

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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 nearly everyone regardless of their own migratory status, and many contemporary societies – especially, but not exclusively their urban centers – have been described as postmigrant, multicultural or superdiverse. This course critically explores migration from global and local perspectives, emphasizing the postcolonial and neocolonial power geometries that produce specific forms of human mobility. Drawing on a range of primary texts (UN documents, first-person narratives, poetry) and analytical contributions from migration research, political science, cultural studies, anthropology, queer theory, human geography, and sociology, students will examine diverse social experiences and meanings of migration, as well as a range of related concepts such as belonging, border, citizenship, refugeedom, and solidarity, among others. Through in-class discussions, guest lectures, and off-campus visits students will deepen understanding of migration regimes, migration discourses, and migrant infrastructures in various geographical and historical contexts. Designed by scholars and educators from across the Open Society University Network (AlQuds Bard College in Palestine, Bard College in the United States, and Bard College Berlin in Germany), 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. Please note that due to the network aspect of this course some sessions will take place outside our regular class hours – the schedule will be updated accordingly on Google Classroom.

Readings

All the readings will be available via **Google Classroom**. 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 reflections,

ideas, and questions are kept in one place. Several of the readings are common to all the classes participating in this network collaborative course (BCB, AQB, and Annandale), providing a common theoretical base and points of reference for the online discussions and asynchronous assignments.

Assignments

Several assignments will add up to your final grade for this class alongside your participation grade: 1) an image assignment (15%), 2) a keyword (25%), and 3) a 3000-word academic essay (30%). Most of the assignments will be developed in several stages, allowing you to revise your own and your peers' work. The deadlines for the network assignments will be announced in agreement with other participating campuses. 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 via Google Classroom.

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): 15% // TBA
Assignment 2 (keyword): 25% // TBA
Assignment 3 (final paper): 30% // 14 May

Week 1

27 January

Introduction of the key themes.

29 January

Thoughts on the Study of Migration

- Lucy Mayblin & Joe Turner (2020) Introduction to *Migration Studies and Colonialism*.
- Nof Nasser-Eddin and Nour Abu-Assab in Conversation (2020) Decolonial Approaches to Refugee Migration. *Migration and Society*.

Week 2

3 February

Categorical Fetishism

- Heaven Crawley & 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.
- Sukhwant Dhaliwal & Kirsten Forkert (2016) Deserving and undeserving migrants. *Soundings* 61: 49-61.

5 February

Visual Worlds of Migration

- WJT Mitchell (2012) Migration, Law, and the Image: Beyond the Veil of Ignorance. In: *Seeing Through Race*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 126-148.
- Tina Campt (2017) "Introduction: Listening to images: An exercise in counterintuition." In *Listening to Images*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Teju Cole (2019) A Crime Scene at the Border. *The New York Times*.

ASSIGNMENT 1a: Find an image of migration and post it on the padlet in the BCB column by **12 February**. 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.

Week 3

10 February

Refugees

- Hannah Arendt (1943) We, Refugees. *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*. Ed. Marc Robinson. Boston: Faber & Faber, 110-119.
- Dina Nayeri (2017) The Ungrateful Refugee: We Have No Debt to Repay. *The Guardian*.

12 February

Refugees and the UN

- The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees
- UNHCR Forced Displacement in 2023 (Global Trends Report)

ASSIGNMENT 1b: Look at the images AQB and Bard students posted on the padlet and read their short statements. Make sure to take notes or offer comments/add hashtags directly on the padlet by **17 February**.

Week 4

17 February

Deconstructing Forced Migration, Rethinking Asylum

- Lucy Mayblin & Joe Turner (2020) *Migration Studies and Colonialism*. Chapter 5.

NETWORK ONLINE SESSION – Tuesday, 18 February 4:30-6 pm (no class on 26 February)

19 February

Managing and Representing Displacement

- Liisa Malkki (1996) Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization. *Cultural Anthropology* 11.3: 377-404.
- Daria Krivonos (2022) Who stands with Ukraine in the long term? On the invisible labour of Ukrainian migrant communities. *LeftEast*: <https://lefteast.org/who-stands-with-ukraine/>.

ASSIGNMENT 1c: Revise your original 500-word statement to a 1000-word text and submit it to me via Google Classroom by **24 February**. Please see the assignment prompt for more details and grading criteria.

Week 5

24 February

Keywords of Migration, Part 1

- Raymond Williams (1983) Preface & Nationalist. In: *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rana Issa (2023) Nakba, Sumud, Intifada: A Personal Lexicon of Palestinian Loss and Resistance. *The Funambulist*: <https://thefunambulist.net/magazine/redefining-our-terms/nakba-sumud-intifada-a-personal-lexicon-of-palestinian-loss-and-resistance>.
- Zoé Samudzi (2023) Genocide: When Does State Violence Pass the Threshold? *The Funambulist*: <https://thefunambulist.net/magazine/redefining-our-terms/genocide-when-does-state-violence-pass-the-threshold>.

26 February

No class (see above)

Week 6

3 March

Keywords of Migration, Part 2

- Nur Masalha (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.
- Mona Bhan, Haley Duschinski & 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.
- Kashmiri-English alphabet from Arundhati Roy's 2017 *Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (distributed in class)
- Mosab Abu Toha (2022) Palestine A-Z. In: *Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear*. (distributed in class)

ASSIGNMENT 2a: Pick three keywords from the keywords of migration pool created by faculty and/or add different keywords. Please submit your selected keywords by the morning of **5 March** specifying your first, second, and third choices.

5 March

Places and Their Pasts, Part 1

- Doreen Massey (1996) *Places and Their Pasts*.
- Walter Rodney (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Verso. Excerpts.

ASSIGNMENT 2b: Get in touch with your assigned partner and start working on your keyword. You will also receive a handout that will help you structure your work. Your keyword abstract is due by **10 March**.

Week 7

10 March

Places and Their Pasts, Part 2

- Manuela Boatcă & Fabio Santos (2023) Of Rags and Riches in the Caribbean: Creolizing Migration Studies. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 21.2: 132-145.

12 March

KEYWORDS NETWORK ONLINE SESSION (exact time TBA)

ASSIGNMENT 2c: Consider the feedback you've received on your keyword from your peers and make an appointment with your assigned partner(s) to continue working on it. Upload a revised keyword by **24 March**.

Week 8

17 March

Borderlands

- Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) *The Homeland. Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Gladys Tzul Tzul (2024) Analyzing the Border through an Indigenous Lens. *The Funambulist* 56: 16-19.

19 March

Border Imperialism

- Harsha Walia (2013) What Is Border Imperialism? *Undoing Border Colonialism*.
- Gary Young (2017) End all immigration controls. *The Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/16/end-immigration-controls-money-people-barriers>.
- Achille Mbembe (2018) The Ideas of a Borderless World. *Africa Is a Country*: <https://africasacountry.com/2018/11/the-idea-of-a-borderless-world>

Week 9

24 March

Border Violence, Part 1 (Exact time and date TBA)

- Agnieszka Holland (dir.) *Green Border*. Film screening.
- In preparation, please read this 2024 report on the policy of pushbacks and border violence on the Poland-Belarus border: https://wearemonitoring.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/RaportGranica_srodek_ENG_online.pdf and browse through this website <https://borderviolence.eu>

26 March

Border Violence, Part 2

- Guest lecture: conversation with a human rights activist (TBA)

ASSIGNMENT 2d: Annotate your network peers's keywords according to the instructions. Please make sure to add your annotations by **9 April**.

Week 10

31 March

Home: Objects, Memories, and Storytelling

- Aya Nassar, Mayada Madbouly, Azza Ezzat, Abeer Abazeed, Nayera Abdelrahman Soliman, Menna Agha, Chihab El Khachab, Amira Elwakil, Laila Mourad & Mai Taha (2023) Objects, memories, and storytelling: experiments in narrating ideas of home. *City* 27.5-6: 1030-1051.
- Agata Zborowska (2022) Between Hospitality and Hostility: The Experience of Migration Through Things, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 43:5, 573-588.

2 April

Home, Migration, and Displacement in Poetry and Fiction

- Warsan Shire (2013) Home; Conversations About Home (At the Deportation Centre)
- Ayşegül Savaş (2024) *The Anthropologists*. Excerpt.

Week 11

7 April

The Taste of Home (potluck in W15)

- Aleksandar Hemon (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>
- 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>

9 April

- Guest lecture (TBA)

SPRING BREAK & FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

Week 12

23 April

Starting a House in Berlin

- Tunay Altay (2024) Queer mountains: Migrant drag performers reimagining sexual citizenship in Germany. *Sexualities*.
- Omar Kasmani (2019) Thin Attachments: Writing Berlin in Scenes of Daily Loves. *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 1.4: 34-53.

Assignment 3a: Prepare a 300-word abstract presenting your final paper ideas including a works cited and submit it by **29 April**.

Week 13

28 April

KEYWORD PRESENTATIONS ZOOM (exact time TBA)

30 April

Peer review of final paper ideas

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

Assignment 3b: Please carefully consider the feedback on your final paper abstract and continue working on it according to the guidelines you have received. The final paper is due on **14 May**.

Week 14

5 May

Museum visit with the writer, journalist, and artist Ye Charlotte Ming (exact date TBA)

7 May

Concluding thoughts and reflections

Week 15

Completion week