



INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2021-2022

Critical Perspectives on Migration: Mobilities, Borders, and Transnational Connections

ANSO142 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

[Schedule & Room](#)

Course Description

From news coverage of the so-called migrant and refugee 'crisis', to the scholarly problematization of border regimes and the migration-development nexus, migration and its governance are at the center of heated debates and controversies both within academia and the public sphere. This seminar addresses current approaches to migration, aiming to provide a critical perspective on different forms of international mobility. Situating migration in historical perspective, and building on recent anthropological research, the seminar interrogates different categorizations of mobility - from forced to voluntary migration, from refugee to migrant - uncovering their epistemological and political underpinnings, and putting them into perspective with the concrete experiences, aspirations and trajectories of people crossing international borders. The governance of migration and the way states and borders produce (il)legality will be scrutinized, as will be notions of transnationalism, diaspora, and return that help foreground the themes of circulation, connection, displacement and belonging. The goal is to develop with students a profound, research-based, socially relevant understanding of the complex processes that constitute and characterize migration in the contemporary world, and to provide them with a range of theoretical and methodological tools to analyze and make reasoned interventions in this global field.

> PROFESSOR

Valerio Simoni

valerio.simoni@graduateinstitute.ch

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

Julis Charlotte Koch

julis.koch@graduateinstitute.ch

[Office hours](#)

Syllabus

Structure and Objectives

This seminar will combine lectures and discussions in class. The lectures will address a range of themes and approaches relevant to understand and make reasoned interventions in the field of migration. They will be complemented by key readings on the subject. Discussions will be based on the readings assigned, as well as on the research proposals that the students will have to prepare, which will be debated in class in the final weeks of the seminar (See Evaluation and Grading, and Course Schedule and Reading List).

The main objective of the seminar is to develop with students a broad understanding of migration and of its study in the social sciences. The range of topics and perspectives addressed will familiarize students with sociological and anthropological approaches to various forms of migration and mobility, enabling them to develop analytical skills and critical thinking on these global phenomena, and to productively engage in contemporary debates and initiatives. Combining the discussion of current theories and concepts with the analysis of concrete ethnographic examples and case studies, the seminar provides students with theoretical and methodological tools to design and carry out their own research projects and professional undertakings on migration.

Evaluation and Grading

The evaluation aims to encourage critical thinking, analytical engagement with current academic debates, and the ability to understand and build on the scholarship explored in the seminar to develop personal research projects.

Evaluation and grading are based on the following criteria:

• Class participation and readings posts and discussion (20%)

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, and, for each session, to read at least two of the assigned readings. Based on the readings, each week students are required to submit two posts on an online board set up for this task (instructions and links to the weekly board will be provided in class and on the course Moodle page). These posts should be short (3-5 sentences) and constitute an opportunity for students to informally engage with the topic and with each other. Students may comment, challenge, or ask follow-up statements about the readings, or alternatively respond to each other's thoughts, share additional documents, news, or blog posts that relate to the week's topic. The posts will be reviewed by the Professor and TA prior to each session, and be used as conversation starters for the discussion in class.

• Outline for final research paper (20%)

By week 7 of the course (8 November), students will submit a written outline for their final research paper. The text, of no more than 1000 words (excluding references), should set out the theme that will be developed in the final research paper, including a *problematique*, research question(s), relevant bodies of literature, and data/sources. The topic must be broadly related to the themes, theories and approaches discussed in class, but is not limited to the subjects explicitly addressed in the lectures and/or in the assigned readings. From week 7, the texts will be circulated among all students in view of their public presentation and discussion in weeks 10, 11 and 12 (29 November, 6 and 13 December). These three sessions

will be dedicated to the presentation, by each student, of their research paper outline, and their discussion in class.

- **Final research paper (60%)**

The final requirement for this class is a research paper, of maximum 4000 words (excluding references), that develops the theme proposed in the outline essay (see point above). Students may decide to conduct original fieldwork or interviews for this final essay, although this is not required. Students will have to send their final research paper to the Professor and TA, via email, by the 3rd of January 2022 at the latest.

During the semester, students are encouraged to make use of reception hours to ask for guidance and advice on any of the above-mentioned elements of evaluation.

Course Policies

- Attendance in class is mandatory. More than one unexcused absence will affect the student's overall grade.
- Papers should be written in English or French, double-spaced, using standard 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. The student's name, the paper's title, the date, the course's title and page numbers must be mentioned.
- Quotations and bibliography must follow the Chicago Manual of Style or the Harvard Referencing System.
- Students must hand in papers on time electronically as a Word file (no need to provide hard copies).
- Papers that are submitted with an unjustified delay (justifications must be provided via email to the Professor and TA), significantly exceed the word limit ($\pm 10\%$) and do not comply with the general guidelines will impact negatively on the student's overall grade.
- All of the articles and book chapters indicated in the course schedule and reading list will be made available electronically on the course Moodle site.
- Plagiarism, that is deliberately or inadvertently representing the work of others as one's own, constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will not be tolerated. Please refer to the Graduate Institute's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism, available in the "Academic Policies and Regulations" section of the Student Portal.

Course Schedule and Reading List

Please note that the theme for each week and the reading list might be modified slightly during the semester. Students will be informed in due time of any change in the programme.

Additional readings and other media resources will be recommended in the first week of the course and during each lesson.

Week 1 (27 September) - Introduction and Course Overview

Readings:

Castles, S., de Haas, H. and Miller, M.J. 2020. Introduction. In: S. Castles, H. de Haas, and M.J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World. Sixth Edition*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. [see <http://www.age-of-migration.com/> for additional resources]

International Organization for Migration. 2020. *World Migration Report*. Geneva: IOM.

Week 2 (4 October) - Historical Perspectives on Migration and its Study

Readings:

Akyeampong, E. 2013 Slavery, Indentured Labor, and the Making of a Transnational World. In A. Quayson and G. Daswani (eds.), *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism*. Malden and Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 163-171.

Balachandran, G. 2014. Atlantic Paradigms and Aberrant Histories. *Atlantic Studies* 11(1): 47-63.

Bhabha, J. 2017. Human Mobility and the Longue Durée: The Prehistory of Global Migration Law. *AJIL Unbound* 111: 136-141.

Hoerder, D. 2002. *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-21 [Chapter 1].

Week 3 (11 October) - Interrogating Categories of Mobility: 'Refugee', 'Migrant', 'Expatriate', 'Tourist'

Readings:

Amit, V. 2017. *Going First Class? New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement*. Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 1-14 [Chapter 1].

Malkki, L.H. 1995. Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugees Studies' to the National Order of Things. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 495-523.

Glick Schiller, N. and Salazar, N.B. 2013. Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2): 183-200.

Zetter, R. 2007. More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20(2): 172-192.

Week 4 (18 October) – Departures and Expectations: Fleeing for Refuge, Seeking a Better Life

Readings:

Agier, M. 2002. *Aux bords du monde, les réfugiés*. Paris : Flammarion [Chapitre 2]. [English version Agier, M. 2008. *On the Margins of the World: The Refugee Experience Today*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity, pp. 7-38].

Scalettaris, G., Monsutti, A. and Donini, A. 2019. Young Afghans at the Doorsteps of Europe: The Difficult Art of Being a Successful Migrant. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47(3): 519-535.

Vigh, H. 2009. Wayward Migration: On Imagined Futures and Technological Voids. *Ethnos* 74(1): 91-109.

Vogt, W.A. 2013. Crossing Mexico: Structural Violence and the Commodification of Undocumented Central American Migrants. *American Ethnologist* 40(4): 764-780.

Week 5 (25 October) - Governing Migration: States, Borders, and the Production of (Il)legality

De Genova, N.P. 2013. Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': The Scene of Exclusion, the Obscene of Inclusion. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36(7): 1180-1198.

Fassin, D. 2011. Policing Borders, Producing Boundaries: The Governmentality of Immigration in Dark Times. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40: 213-226.

Hage, G. 2016. *État de Siège*: A Dying Domesticating Colonialism? *American Ethnologist* 43(1): 38-49.

Willen, S.S. 2007. Toward a Critical Phenomenology of 'Illegality': State Power, Criminalization, and Abjectivity among Undocumented Migrant Workers in Tel Aviv, Israel. *International Migration* 45(3): 8-38.

Week 6 (1 November) - Diaspora and Transnationalism: Displacement, Connections, and Belonging

Readings:

Brubaker, R. 2005. The 'Diaspora' Diaspora. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1): 1-19.

Clifford, J. 1994. Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology* 9(3): 302-338.

Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L., and Szanton Blanc, C. 1995. From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration. *Anthropological Quarterly* 68(1): 48-63.

Paerregaard, K. 2010 Interrogating Diaspora: Power and Conflict in Peruvian Migration. In R. Bauböck and T. Faist (eds.), *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 91-107.

Week 7 (8 November) - Return Migration: Promises and Challenges of Homecomings

Readings:

Constable, N. 1999. At Home but Not at Home: Filipina Narratives of Ambivalent Returns. *Cultural Anthropology* 14(2): 203-228.

Stefansson, A. H. 2004. Homecomings to the Future: From Diasporic Mythographies to Social Projects of Return. In Markowitz, F. and Stefansson, A. H. (eds.) *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, pp. 2–20.

Olwig, K. F. 2012. The 'Successful' Return: Caribbean Narratives of Migration, Family, and Gender. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18(4): 828-845.

Drotbohm, H. 2015. The Reversal of Migratory Family Lives: A Cape Verdean Perspective on Gender and Sociality Pre- and Post-deportation, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41(4): 653-670.

[Submission and circulation of outline for the final research paper]

Week 8 (15 November) - Migration and Development: A Debated Relation

Readings:

Faist, T. 2008. Migrants as Transnational Development Agents: An Inquiry into the Newest Round of the Migration–Development Nexus. *Population, Space and Place* 14: 21-42.

Landau, L.B. 2018. A Chronotope of Containment Development: Europe's Migrant Crisis and Africa's Reterritorialisation. *Antipode* 51(1): 169-186.

Monsutti, A. 2008. Migration et développement : Une histoire de brouilles et de retrouvailles. *Annuaire suisse de politique de développement* 27(2): 23-42.

Simoni, V. and Voirol, J. 2021. Remittances and Morality: Family Obligations, Development, and the Ethical Demands of Migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47(11): 2516-2536.

Week 9 (22 November) - Public Controversies and Engaged Interventions: Questioning the So-Called 'European Migrant/Refugee Crisis'

Readings:

De Genova, N. 2017. Introduction: The Borders of 'Europe' and the European Question. In N. De Genova (ed.), *The Borders of 'Europe': Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-35.

Cabot, H. 2019. The Business of Anthropology and the European Refugee Regime. *American Ethnologist* 46(3): 261-275.

Chétail, V. 2016. Looking Beyond the Rhetoric of the Refugee Crisis: The Failed Reform of the Common European Asylum System. *European Journal of Human Rights* 5: 584-601.

Heller, C, Pezzanui, L. and Stierl, M. 2019. Towards a Politics of Freedom of Movement. In J. Reece (ed.), *Open Borders: In Defense of Free Movement*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, pp. 51-76. [French version Heller, C, Pezzanui, L. and Stierl, M. 2019. Vers une politique de la liberté de mouvement. *Communications* 104 : 79-93].

Holmes, S., and Castañeda, H. 2016. Representing the 'European Refugee Crisis' in Germany and Beyond: Deservingness and Difference, Life and Death. *American Ethnologist* 43(1): 12-24.

Mayanthi, F. and Giordano, C. (eds.) 2016. Refugees and the Crisis of Europe. Hot Spots Series, *Fieldsights*. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/series/refugees-and-the-crisis-of-europe>

Monsutti, A. 2018. Mobility as a Political Act. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41(3): 448-455.

Week 10 (29 November) - Presentations by Students and Discussion

Week 11 (6 December) - Presentations by Students and Discussion

Week 12 (13 December) - Presentations by Students and Discussion

Week 13 (20 December) - Final Synthesis and Discussion: Current Research Interests and Concerns (e.g., Migration and Covid-19)

Readings:

To be defined based on students' interests

Additional Resources

International Organization for Migration (OIM): <https://www.iom.int/>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): <https://www.unhcr.org/>

IMISCOE International Migration Research Network: <https://www.imiscoe.org/>

Migration Research Hub: <https://migrationresearch.com/>

Migration Journals (non-exhaustive)

<i>Comparative Migration Studies</i>	<i>Migration and Society</i>
<i>Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies</i>	<i>Migration Letters</i>
<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>	<i>Migration Studies</i>
<i>Forced Migration Review</i>	<i>Migrations et Société URMIS</i>
<i>Hommes et Migrations</i>	<i>Mobilities</i>
<i>Immigrants and Minorities</i>	<i>Mondi Migranti</i>
<i>International Journal of Migration and Border Studies</i>	<i>New Diversities</i>
<i>International Migration</i>	<i>Nordic Journal of Migration Research</i>
<i>International Migration Review</i>	<i>Périplos: Revista de Pesquisa sobre Migrações</i>
<i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i>	<i>Refugee Survey Quarterly</i>
<i>Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies</i>	<i>Revista Migrações</i>
<i>Journal of Refugee Studies</i>	<i>Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales</i>
<i>Migraciones</i>	<i>Studi Emigrazione</i>
<i>Migraciones Internacionales</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Migrationsforschung</i>