TOPICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY III: MIGRATION

Couse objectives:

Recent shifts in the global political and economic order have driven large-scale migrations across regions, resulting in growing populations with allegiances spanning their places of origin, transit, and destination. This course provides analytical tools to understand contemporary migration from an anthropological and interdisciplinary perspective. It offers an advanced overview of key issues and debates, exploring foundational concepts and the connections between migration, globalization, and (b)orders through in-depth analyses. The course places migration within the broader context of human mobility, the history and ethics of borders, and the material and symbolic dimensions of migration, including the practices surrounding border mortality. Students will also gain practical skills in researching and writing about migrant populations, with discussions on career opportunities in migration-related fields.

Learning outcomes:

This course is designed for individuals seeking to critically analyse the complexities of migration and its impact on the modern world. Students will gain insights into migration processes while developing the skills necessary to conduct and engage with research on contemporary migration. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the complexities of migration and its influence on contemporary social, economic, political, and cultural dynamics.
- Recognize how human mobility is reshaping everyday life for migrant and non-migrant populations.
- Develop advanced skills in critical analysis and writing about global migration, bridging theory and real-world issues.

Assessment:

1. Class/tutorial participation and discussion (20%)

Students are expected to engage thoughtfully, critically, and self-reflexively with course readings. All assigned readings must be completed before the class in which they will be discussed. Regular attendance is required, and students are encouraged to actively participate in class discussions. Thoughtful engagement and contributions to conversations are key components of the learning experience in this course.

2. Leading tutorial discussion (20%)

Each student will take responsibility for leading a tutorial discussion, either individually or as part of a group, to promote active and critical engagement with the readings and course materials. This includes delivering a brief presentation designed to spark interest, encourage classmates to explore the designated topic in depth, and foster meaningful discussion. The primary goal is to create a collaborative environment where participants can collectively explore relevant issues and experiences. To this end, students are encouraged to incorporate a variety of supporting materials, such as newspapers, images, videos, or other media.

3.   Mid-term Essay (30%)

By 18 March, students are required to submit one essay of 1500 words (UG) on a self-selected topic that pertains to the course. They are expected to incorporate class readings into their work to develop their own analysis and argument. Additionally, students are encouraged to utilize other sources of information to enrich their essays further.

4.   Take-home Exam (30%)

Questions for the take-home exam will be given on the last day of class. Students will have 14 days to complete this assignment, which will be due on 29 April.

Plagiarism:

Students are required by university policy to submit all papers to VeriGuide (the Chinese University Plagiarism Identification Engine System). For more information go to https://academic2.veriguide.org/portalcuhk/ and check the website http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/ for more information about plagiarism and VeriGuide.

Grade descriptors:

Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on most learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on several learning outcomes
F	Unsatisfactory performance on several learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Course structure:

Readings marked with a * are required readings for MA students and optional for UG students.
Readings marked (suggested) are optional for MA and UG students.

W1   7 Jan   Does migration hold value?

Grant, C. (2022) "Wheel and Come Again: Circular Migration To and From the Caribbean", *Lapham's Quarterly*, https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/migration/wheel-and-come-again.

(suggested) Gregorič Bon, N. (2017) "Movement Matters: The Case of Southern Albania", *Ethnologie Française*, 47(2), 301-308.

(suggested) Sassen, S. (1998) *Globalization and its Discontents*, New York, The New Press, 55-75.

W2   14 Jan   What does migration involve?

Donnan, H. and Wilson T.M. (1999) *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State*, London, Routledge, 1-17.

Torpey, J. (2000) *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1-18.

*Ramsay, G. (2021) "Borders and Bordered Ways of Seeing", *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, https://polarjournal.org/2021/07/22/borders-and-bordered-ways-of-seeing/

(suggested) O'Byrne, D.J. (2001) "On Passports and Border Controls", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 28(2), 399-416.

(suggested) Heyman, J. and Symons J. (2012) "Borders", in D. Fassin (ed.) *A Companion to Moral Anthropology*, 540-554.

(suggested) Calavita, K. (2007) "Immigration, Law, Race, and Identity", *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 3, 1-17.

W3   21 Jan   How does talent drive migration?

Cuadrado, C. et al. (2023) *Expatriates or Immigrants? Navigating In-between Categories in the Netherlands*, https://www.leidenanthropologyblog.nl/articles/expatriates-or-immigrants-navigating-in-between-categories-in-the-netherlands.

Brettell, C.B. (2018) "Conceptualizing Migration and Mobility in Anthropology: An Historical Analysis", *Transitions: Journal of Transient Migration*, 2(1), 7–25.

*Fechter M. (2007) "Living in a Bubble: Expatriate's Transnational Spaces", in V. Amit (ed) *Going First Class? New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement*, New York, Berghahn Books, 33-52.

(suggested) Liu-Farrer, G., Yeoh, B.S., Baas, M. (2021) "Social Construction of Skill: An Analytical Approach Toward the Question of Skill in Cross-border Labour Mobilities", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2237-2251.

(suggested) Glick Shiller, N., Bash, L., Szanton Blanc, C. (1995) "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration", *Anthropological Quarterly*, 68(1), 48-63.

W4   28 Jan   What's the importance of global education?

Hansen, A.S. and Thøgersen, S. (2015) "The Anthropology of Chinese Transnational Educational Migration", *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 3, 3-14.

*Ploser, J. and Nada, C. (2020) "International Student Migration and the Postcolonial Heritage of European Higher Education: Perspectives from Portugal and the UK", *Higher Education*, 80, 373-389.

(suggested) Tu, M. and Nehring, D. (2020) "Remain, Return, or Re-migrate? The (Im)mobility Trajectory of Mainland Chinese Students after Completing Their Education in the UK", *International Migration*, 58(3), 43-57.

(suggested) Pan, D. (2011) "Student Visas, Undocumented Labour, and the Boundaries of Legality: Chinese Migration and English as a Foreign Language Education in the Republic of Ireland", *Social Anthropology*, 19(3), 268-287.

W5   4 Feb   Why is migration a gendered process?

Lutz, H. (2010) "Gender in the Migratory Process", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36(10), 1647-1663.

Mahler, S.J. (2010) "Transnational Relationships: The Struggle to Communicate Across Borders", *Identities*, 7(4), 583-619.

*Tu Huynh, T. (2015) "A 'Wild West' of Trade? African Women and Men and the Gendering of Globalisation from Below in Guangzhou", *Identities*, 23(5), 501-518.

(suggested) Chin, C.B.N. (2013) *Cosmopolitan Sex Workers: Women and Migration in a Global City*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 84-119.

W6   11 Feb   Is it okay to use the term "migrant"?

Goode, E. and Ben-Yehuda, N. (2009) *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, West Sussex, Wiley Blackwell, 88-108.

*Musarò, P. (2018) "Beyond the Border Spectacle: Migration Across the Mediterranean Sea", in F. Vecchio and A. Gerard (eds) *Entrapping Asylum Seekers*, London, Palgrave, 57-82.

(suggested) Walsh, J.P. and Hill, D. (2022) "Social Media, Migration and the Platformization of Moral Panic: Evidence from Canada", *Convergence*, 29(3), 690-712.

(suggested) Tan, K.P. (2016) G*overning Global-City Singapore: Legacies and Futures After Lee Kuan Yew*, New York: Routledge, Ch. 6.

(suggested) Banda, F. and Mawadza, A. (2014) "'Foreigners are Stealing our Birth Right': Moral Panics and the Discursive Construction of Zimbabwean Immigrants in South African Media", *Discourse & Communication*, 9(1), 47-64.

W7   18 Feb   Lunar New Year Holiday (no class)

W8   25 Feb   Is forced migration real?

Crisp, J. (2008), "*Beyond the Nexus: UNHCR's Evolving Perspective on Refugee Protection and International Migration*", UNHCR, Research Paper No. 155.

Koser, K. (1997) "Social Networks and the Asylum Cycle: The Case of Iranians in the Netherlands", *The International Migration Review*, 31(3), 591-611.

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

(suggested) Bohmer C. and Shuman, A. (2013) "Narrating Atrocity: Obstacles to Proving Credibility in Asylum Claims", RLI Working Paper No.7.

(suggested) Khosravi, S. (2010) "*'Illegal Traveller': An Auto-ethnography of Borders*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 69-84.

W9   4 Mar   Reading Week (no class)

W10   11 Mar   How risky is it to cross borders?

De León, J. (2015) *In the Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*, Oakland, University of California Press, 62-86.

Bosworth, M. and Guild, M. (2008) "Governing Through Migration Control", *British Journal of Criminology*, 48, 703-719.

*Pickering, S. and Cochrane, B. (2012) "Irregular Border-crossing Deaths and Gender: Where, How and Why Women Die Crossing Borders, *Theoretical Criminology*, 17(1), 27-48.

(suggested) Vecchio F. and Gerard, A. (2015) "Surviving the Politics of Illegality", in S. Pickering and J. Ham (eds), *The Routledge Handbook on Crime and International Migration*, London, Routledge, 179-192.

(suggested) Bélanger, D. et al. (2011) "From Foreign Trainees to Unauthorized Workers: Vietnamese Migrant Workers in Japan", *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 20(1), 31-53.

W11   18 Mar   Is there an alternative to migration?

Ferracioli, L. (2012) "Morality in Migration: A Review Essay", *Global Justice*, 121-129, https://www.theglobaljusticenetwork.org/index.php/gjn/article/view/35/41.

NYCLU (2025), *The Case for Open Borders*, https://www.nyclu.org/podcast/the-case-for-open-borders.

*Arnaiz, B.N. (2022) "Should We Open Borders? Yes, but not in the Name of Global Justice", *Ethics & Global Politics*, 15(2), 55-68.

(suggested) Kubrin, C.E. (2014) "Secure or Insecure Communities?", *Criminology & Public Policy*, 13(2), 1-16.

W12   25 Mar   How should we approach the study of migration?

Venkatesh, S. (2013) "'Doing the Hustle': Constructing the Ethnographer in the American Ghetto", in R. E. Ocejo (ed.) *Ethnography and the City: Readings on Doing Urban Fieldwork*, New York, Routledge, 179-185.

Chege, N. (2014) "'What's in it for me?': Negotiations of Asymmetries, Concerns and Interests Between the Researcher and Research Subjects", *Ethnography*, 16(4), 463-481.

*Vazquez Maggio, M.L. and Westcott, H. (2014) "Researchers' Reflections on Empathy Following Interviews with Migrants", *Qualitative Research Journal*, 14(3), 214-227.

(suggested) Carling, J. et al. (2014) "Beyond the Insider–Outsider Divide in Migration Research", *Migration Studies*, 2(1), 36-54.

(suggested) Fitzgerarld, D (2006) "Towards a Theoretical Ethnography of Migration", *Qualitative Sociology*, 29(1), 1-24.

W13   1 Apr   How do we write about migration?

Horst, C. et al. (2019) *Accountable to Whom? Reflecting on the Ethics of Doing Migration Research*, https://blogs.prio.org/2019/11/accountable-to-whom-reflecting-on-the-ethics-of-doing-migration-research/.

Jacobsen, K. and L. B. Landau (2003) *The Dual Imperative in Refugee Research: Some Methodological and Ethical Considerations in Social Science Research on Forced Migration*, Working Paper 19, 1-23.

*Eastmond, M. (2007) "Stories as Lived Experience: Narratives in Forced Migration Research", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20, 248-264.

(suggested) Bloemraad I. and Menjívar C. (2021) "Precarious Times, Professional Tensions: The Ethics of Migration Research and the Drive for Scientific Accountability", *International Migration Review*, 56(1), 4-32.

(suggested) Markova, E. (2009) "The 'Insider' Position: Ethical Dilemmas and Methodological Concerns in Researching Undocumented Migrants with the Same Ethnic Background", in I. Van Liempt and V. Bilger (eds) *Ethics of Migration Research Methodology: Dealing with Vulnerable Immigrants*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 141-154.

W14   8 Apr   What careers are available to work with migration, and why?

Hollands, M. (2001) Upon Closer Acquaintance: The Impact of Direct Contact with Refugees on Dutch Hosts, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(3), 295-314.

Buzungu, H.F. and Rugkåsa, M. (2023) "Lost in Culture: Language Discordance and Culturalization in Social Work with Migrants", *Nordic Social Work Research*, 13(4), 537-549.

*Harrell-Bond, B. (2002) Can Humanitarian Work with Refugees Be Humane? *Human Rights Quarterly*, 24(1), 51-85.

(suggested) Chkam, H. (2016) "Aid and the Perpetuation of Refugee Camps: The Case of Dadaab in Kenya 1991–2011", *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 35, 79-97.

(suggested) Gomez, R., Newell, B. C. and Vannini, S. (2020) "Empathic Humanitarianism: Understanding the Motivations behind Humanitarian Work with Migrants at the US–Mexico Border", *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 8(1), 1-13.

W15   15 Apr   How can we approach migration differently?