

Syllabus

Title of the Course:	Commons and Learning to Live Together. A Radical Intervention in Migration and Refugee Studies from Lesbos, Greece	Course Breakdown:	28 hours online course, 152 hours independent hours
Name of the Instructor:	Dr. Nagehan Uskan & Salim Nabi	Weekly class time:	Thursdays 17:00 – 19:00 CEST / 18:00 – 20:00 EEST
Language:	English		
Hosted by:	Humboldt Universität zu Berlin	Certificate issued by:	Humboldt Universität zu Berlin
min. number of participants:	25	max. number of participants:	30

This digital research lab is co-organized with the research group “Beyond social cohesion: Global repertoires of living together (RePLITO)” and hosted at the Department of Gender and Media Studies for the South Asian Region at HU Berlin.

Description of the course and the Pedagogical Approaches

This course intends to subvert the relation of the academy with the “field” by bringing the field to the classroom - with all the challenges that such an interactive and experiential learning poses to the authority of the academy over questions of theory, method, and truth/representation. The course emerged and was designed out of the lives the island has shared with us all: refugees, migrants, activists, and researchers. The people who will share their experiences and reflections are or have been participants in collectives and/or direct actions that we are/were part of and support.

It is also shaped with theories of Autonomy & the autonomy of migration in the context of self-organization and self-representation. Apart from reflecting on the minor resistance points of migrants at the political level, which aim to bring the migrant existence far away from their definition as “bare life”, defined by Agamben, we will also explore the potentials of bringing the autonomy of migrants to the academic field as a “constitutive (subjective, creative and productive) power” (De Genova, Garelli and Tazzioli, 2018).

Learning Aims

Participants in the collective of this course will:

- Engage in an interactive way in a process of co-learning among refugees, students, and activists.
- Engage with academic and professional material concerning migration, refugee “status”, and exile, as well as their (mis)management, the political, economic, and social representations of refugees, and the ramifications these have on the lives of refugees.

Upon the successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- The participants will be able to critically evaluate existing political, media, NGO, artistic and academic narratives and discourses as they pertain to refugees.
- The participants will have practical experience with co-research methodology.
- The participants will have a clearer overview and detail of the refugee struggles on the island since the implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement of 2016.
- An overview of the history of the island with migration and refugees, including the Asia Minor migration of Greeks in the early 20th Century, the traces of which affect today’s local perceptions.
- Their literary, artistic, or academic reflections will be part of the publication of the reflections on the proceedings of the collective commons.

Course requirements

Course components include:

- Lectures
- Readings
- Co-Research Groups

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

- Participation
- Co-Research Group Project
- Final Presentation of Co-Research Project

Organization of the course

Outline of the Course Schedule

Week 1		Introduction
Week 2	Participants forming Co-Research groups for interested artistic, written, multi-media projects	
Week 3		
Week 4		
Week 5		
Week 6		Guest Speakers from Squats in Lesvos, Athens, and Thessaloniki
Week 7		
Week 8		
Week 9	Presentations of Co-Research Project	
Week 10		
Week 11		
Week 12		
Week 13		
Week 14		

Syllabus / Reading List

Week 1: Introduction

Why do we need a collective migrant intervention in Migration Studies?

Reading materials:

- Khosravi, S. (2014). Waiting in B. Anderson, M. Keith (eds). Migration: A COMPAS Anthology, Oxford: COMPAS.
- Saab, A. J. (2013) Scholarly Acts of Everyday Militancy, in Militant Research Handbook, (5) New York: New York University
- Some notes on the representation in postcolonial studies

Week 2: Problematics of Refugee and Migrant Representation

- *Participants forming Co-Research groups for interested artistic, written, multi-media projects*

Reading materials:

- Hall, S. (1997). The Spectacle of Other in S. Hall (ed.) Representation (223-291). Sage Publications: London
- Fehrenbach, H., Rodogno, D. (2015b). “A horrific photo of a drowned Syrian Child”: Humanitarian photo and NGO media strategies in historical perspective. International Review of the Red Cross (2015), 97 (900), 1121–1155.
- Gemi, E., Ulasiuk, I., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2013). Migrants and media newsmaking practices. Journalism Practice, 7(3), 266–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2012.740248>
- Yalouri, E. (2019). ‘Difficult’ Representations. Visual art engaging with the refugee crisis. Visual Studies DOI: 10.1080/1472586X.2019.1653788

Week 3: Refocus & Wish: two attempts at self-representation

Media Material:

- Self-Presentation: Films made by these collectives to be watched
- Kino Mosaik (2018) A collective representation attempt: Natives of the New World
- Mohammed Hussein Video
- Refocus Media Lab. videos
- Kino Wish (women collective)

Week 4: Women Collective

Readings:

- Federici: Witch-Hunting, Globalization and Feminist Solidarity in Africa Today. In: Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women (Oakland: PM Press, 2018)
- Zapatista Statement
- N. Christopoulou & M. Leontsini: Weaving Solidarity: Migrant Womens' Organizations in Athens. In: Journal of Intercultural Studies. Vol 30:2, 2017
- United African Women Collective (<https://www.africanwomens.gr/>)

Week 5: LGBTQ+ Collective

- Guest Speaker

Readings:

- Jose Lopez: On Seeking Refuge from an Undeclared War. In: Asylum for Sale
- Siobhan McGuirk: Neoliberalism and LGBT Asylum: A Play in Five Acts. In: Asylum for Sale
- Love and Rage, Lesbos LGBTQ+ Refugee Solidarity Publication, 2019

Week 6: Commons & its Practices

- Guest Speakers from Squats in Lesbos, Athens, and Thessaloniki

Readings:

- Massimo De Angelis: Omnia Sunt Communia. On the Commons and the Transformation to Post Capitalism
- Silvia Federici: Re-Enchanting the World: Feminism & the Politics of Commons
- Lülüfer Körükmeý: Thinking Migrant Solidarity Movements with the Commons. In: The Politics of the Commons: From Theory to Struggle.

Week 7: Neoliberalism & the Regime of Refugee Creation, Control and Management

Readings:

- Michel Foucault: The Birth of Biopolitics
- Nicolas de Genova *Foucault, Migrations and Borders*, Materiali Foucaultiani, vol. II, n.3(2013),pp.153-177
http://www.materialifoucaultiani.org/images/10_degenova.pdf
- Mark Akkerman: *The Military and Security Industry: Promoting Europe's Refugee Regime*
- Annika Lindberg: *In the best Interest of Whom? Professional Humanitarianism and Selfie Samaritans in the Danish Asylum Industry*
- Todd Miller: *Border Militarization in a Warming World: Climate Adaptation for the Rich and Powerful*
- Wallman et al *A Guard's Story* – in *Asylum for Sale*

Week 8: Intersection of Various Migration Roots

Readings:

- Joel van Houdt: *Koja Meri?* - Asylum for Sale
- Alva, Uyi, and Madi: *The Business of Selling Life ... Asylum for Sale*

Week 9: Migrant Struggles in Lesvos I

- Presentation of Co-Research Project
- Greek Migration from Asia Minor in the early 20th Century: talk by descendent of Greek refugees from Asia Minor
- Demonstrations & Refugee Self-Organizations (2016 - 17) - Guest Speaker
- Moria35 Case (2017) --- Legal Centre & HIAS Reports
- SYRIZA Squat (2017)

Week 10: Migrant Struggles in Lesvos II

- Presentation of Co-Research Project
- Sapphous 2018 Sit-In & the Pogrom
- 2019 & Remobilizations
- Self-Organized Women Demonstration in early 2020

Week 11: Covid-19 to the Fire: Migrant Management & Resistances during the Pandemic

- (Presentation of Co-Research Project)

Readings:

- BBC Report & the Fire
- Women Collective & “Where were you?”
- Michele Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*

Week 12: After the Fire: Legal Issues and their Effects

- Presentation of Co-Research Project

Readings:

- Legal Centre Lesbos, & HIAS Reports on the new camp & pushbacks

Week 13: Autonomy of Migration & Migrant Autonomy

- (Presentation of Co-Research Project)

Readings:

- De Genova, N, Garelli, G, Tazzioli, M. (2018). *Autonomy of Asylum? The Autonomy of Migration. Undoing the Refugee Crisis Script.*

Week 14: Conclusions: Critical Reflections on Theory, Methodology and the future of Migration Studies

- Presentation of Co-Research Project

Reading:

- Nicholas De Genova: *“We are of the Connections”*: migration, methodological nationalism and ‘militant research’. *Postcolonial Studies* Vol 16, 2013