

# Course Manual: **Mobility and Border Regimes**

Wednesday 17.00-19.00 (REC C3.05)

Friday 13.00-15.00 (REC C3.06) always check <https://rooster.uva.nl/>

Course catalogue number: 7313T0049Y

Credits: 12 EC

Entry requirements: First year anthropology, Discipline module 1 and/or Discipline module 2, and Orientatie module and second-year essay Etnografisch practicum.

Instruction language: English

Time period: 2022-2023, Semester 1, block 1-2

Lecturer: Barak Kalir ([b.kalir@uva.nl](mailto:b.kalir@uva.nl); office B5.06)

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## **Course objectives**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand a number of historical and contemporary contexts and approaches to the study of mobility and border regimes.
2. Gain skills in thinking, researching, discussing, and writing critically about these approaches.
3. Reflect on the dilemmas of anthropologists' positions and roles in the study of the lived realities of actors in the field.
4. Formulate critical notes, oral presentations, and a solid research paper that show how the study of mobility and border regimes can be used in engaging public debate and current events.

## **Course content**

The mobility of migrants and refugees across borders is one of the most heated political topics in the 21st century. Policies for receiving and determining the status of refugees, surveilling state borders, detaining and deporting illegalized migrants, incorporating migrant minorities, are increasingly the stuff on which elections are lost or won in states across the world. Critical anthropological studies have powerfully responded to the rise in the political and public importance of mobility and borders. Ethnographic studies have often focused on the lived realities of mobile people: border crossers, undocumented migrants, smugglers and traffickers, as well as on key sites such as: dangerous crossings (US-Mexico desert, Mediterranean Sea) and camps (Calais, Lesvos, Manus), and families left behind.

This course aims to introduce students to exciting ethnographic engagement across the structure-agency divide that is at the core of mobility and border regimes. On the one hand, we examine the motivations, fears, hopes and strategies of people who seek to exercise mobility across borders. On the other hand, we uncover structural forces that shape mobility and border regimes by focusing on the interests – economic, political, racial, cultural – of different actors (public institutions, NGOs, private companies) that are implicated in what is nowadays called 'migration management'. In interrogating the meanings and shapes that borders and mobility take on in relation to state sovereignty and processes of globalization, we pay special attention to mundane as well as spectacular interactions between multiple actors in contact zones, for example: the work of border guards, the management of asylum screenings, and the implementation of detention and deportation of illegalized migrants.

## **Teaching methods and format**

Lectures, discussions, student presentations, short clips, documentary films.

Readings include articles, book chapters, and one manuscript: 'Humanitarian Borders - Unequal Mobility and Saving Lives' by Polly Pallister-Wilkins (available at Studievereniging Pegasus, Atheneum, and online from Verso).

**Assessment** consists of three elements:

**Participation (10%)**

- Attendance at all classes is required, and active participation in discussion is expected.
- If you cannot attend a class, notify me per email before the session with the reason.
- For each work group on Friday you need to prepare and write down 2-3 questions/remarks about the weekly literature. You'll be asked to share your questions/remarks in class discussions.

**Assignments – (30%)**

• **4 assignments:**

- Assignment 1 (~400 words / one A4) – go out alone or in pairs to find markers of borders and boundaries in Amsterdam / where you live.
- Assignment 2 (~800 words / two A4) – write a short book review of 'Humanitarian Borders - Unequal Mobility and Saving Lives' by Polly Pallister-Wilkins. What are the 2-3 things you liked most about the book and what is a point of critique.
- Assignment 3 (~800 words / two A4) – write a concept note on your final paper. What's your main topic? What's the main argument? What's your case study? include a list of min. 5 sources you plan to draw on. For each source write 2-3 sentences on its relevance to your final paper.
- Assignment 4 (PPT and/or handout) – paper presentation: prepare a 10-15' presentation of your final paper (motivation, context, main argument, theoretical concepts, relevant debates in which you intervene). You should train and time yourself to make sure the presentation doesn't exceed 10-15' minutes. The day before your presentation is due you should send the PPT and/or handout to me and to one student, who will be assigned to you and act as discussant. After your presentation, the assigned student and me shall provide feedback and then we'll open the floor for everyone's comments, suggestions, tips.

**Final paper (60%)**

The length of the paper should be 6000 words, including footnotes and bibliography (10% margin down, 5% up). The paper should draw on as many sources as you like, but it must include at least 10 academic sources (articles/book chapters) of which 5 sources are from the course literature.

**Grading**

Participation is graded numerically.

4 assignments are graded: A (8-10), B (6-8), C (4-6).

Final paper is graded numerically, according to the criteria in the *Beoordelingsformulier* (see Canvas).

To finish the course your grade for the final paper as well as the entire course must be above 5.5.

You can resit the final paper to repair the final grade. If you, the last obtained grade is decisive.

**Plagiarism**

Fraud and plagiarism are prohibited. The regulations governing fraud and plagiarism for UvA students apply in full. Access these at: [https://student.uva.nl/social-](https://student.uva.nl/social-sciences/shared/studentensites/uva-studentensite/en/az/plagiarism-and-fraud/plagiarism-and-fraud.html)

[sciences/shared/studentensites/uva-studentensite/en/az/plagiarism-and-fraud/plagiarism-and-fraud.html](https://student.uva.nl/social-sciences/shared/studentensites/uva-studentensite/en/az/plagiarism-and-fraud/plagiarism-and-fraud.html). When students cite, paraphrase or refer to literature they should follow the rules as noted in the *Writing Skills and Style Guide*. If these rules are not applied adequately, the assignments will not be examined and the student is automatically due to resit (if scheduled).

When fraud or plagiarism is suspected the lecturer will inform the EC, who will investigate the case. Sanctions vary from exclusion from the concerning course to exclusion from any course for the entire academic year.

# Course Outline

## Week 1 – Key concepts: borders, mobilities, regimes

### **Wednesday (September 7): Introduction and course logistics**

Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Chapter 1: Crossing Borders: The Homeland, Aztlán. San Francisco: Aunt Lute. Pp. 1-13

Newman, David. 2006. Borders and bordering: Towards an interdisciplinary dialogue. *European journal of social theory* 9(2): 171-186.

### **Friday (September 9): No Borders?**

Anderson, Bridget, Nandita Sharma, and Cynthia Wright. 2009. “Why No Borders?” *Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees* 26 (2): 5–18.

Arendt, Hannah. 1943. We Refugees. *Menorah Journal* 31(1): 69-77.

Kalir, Barak. Moving subjects, stagnant paradigms: can the ‘mobilities paradigm’ transcend methodological nationalism?. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2): 311-327.

## Week 2: Citizenship and National Belonging

**Assignment #1 – Manifestations of borders where you live – due on Sep. 15 at 16.00**

### **Wednesday (September 14): Who (decides who) belongs?**

Hage, Ghassan. 2000. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Sydney: Pluto Press. Ch. 2 & 3.

Tonkens, E. , M. Hurenkamp & J. W. Duyvendak. 2010. Culturalization of Citizenship in the Netherlands. In: A. C. d’Appollonia and S. Reich (eds. ) *Managing Ethnic Diversity After 9/11. Integration, Security, and Civil Liberties in Transatlantic Perspective*. London: Rutgers University Press. Pp. 233-252.

### **Friday (September 16): (B)ordering the Nation**

Fanon, Frantz. 1963. On National Culture. In: *The wretched of the earth*. New York: Grove Press. Pp. 145-180.

Malkki, Lisa. 1992. National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1): 24–44.

## Week 3: Crossing borders (Smuggling, Trafficking, Brokering?)

### **Wednesday (September 21): Migrants, refugees, border-crossers**

Agier, Michel. 2002. Between war and city: Towards an urban anthropology of refugee camps. *Ethnography* 3(3): 317-341.

Ford, Michele and Lenore, Lyons. 2012. Smuggling Cultures in the Indonesia-Singapore Borderlands. In Barak Kalir and Malini Sur (Eds.), *Transnational Flows and Permissive Politics: Ethnographies of Human Mobilities in Asia*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Pp. 91-108.

Kapur, Ratna. 2003. The “Other” Side of Globalization: The Legal Regulation of Cross-Border Movements. *Canadian Woman Studies* 22(3): 6-15.

**Friday (September 23): Guest Lecture dr. Tina Harris:  
'Mobility and cross-border trade in the Himalayas'**

Alpes, Maybritt Jill. 2014. Imagining a future in 'bush': migration aspirations at times of crisis in Anglophone Cameroon. *Identities* 21(3): 259-274.

Grabska, Katarzyna. 2020. 'Wasting time': migratory trajectories of adolescence among Eritrean refugee girls in Khartoum. *Critical African Studies* 12(1): 22-36.

**Week 4: Securitization of Mobility**

**Wednesday (September 28): Illegalization of Migrants**

De Genova, Nicholas P. 2002. Migrant 'Illegality' and Deportability in Everyday Life. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31: 419-447.

Schuster, Liza. 2005. A sledgehammer to crack a nut: deportation, detention and dispersal in Europe. *Social Policy and Administration* 39(6): 606-621.

**Friday (September 30): The Role of Civil Society**

Kalir, Barak, and Lieke Wissink. 2016. The deportation continuum: Convergences between state agents and NGO workers in the Dutch deportation field. *Citizenship Studies* 20(1): 34-49.

Rogozen-Soltar, Mikaela. 2012. Ambivalent inclusion: anti-racism and racist gatekeeping in Andalusia's immigrant NGOs. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18(3): 633-651.

**Week 5: Bureaucratization of oppressive regimes**

**Wednesday (October 5): dealing with emotions**

Hall, Alexandra. 2010. 'These People Could be Anyone': Fear, Contempt (and Empathy) in a British Immigration Removal Centre. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36: 881-98.

Kalir, B. 2019. Repressive compassion: deportation caseworkers furnishing an emotional comfort zone in encounters with illegalized migrants. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 42(1): 68-84.

**Friday (October 7): Guest Lecture dr. Apostolos Andrikopoulos:  
'Identity loan and migrant employment in the Netherlands: the rise and fall of abusa'**

Horton, Sarah. 2015. Identity loan: The moral economy of migrant document exchange in California's Central Valley. *American Ethnologist* 42(1): 55-67.

**Week 6: Racialization of Borders**

**Wednesday (October 12): Bordering along Race**

Saucier, P. Khalil and Tyron P. Woods. 2014. Ex aqua: The Mediterranean basin, Africans on the move, and the politics of policing. *Theoria* 61(141): 55-75.

Golash-Boza, Tanya. The immigration industrial complex: Why we enforce immigration policies destined to fail. *Sociology Compass* 3(2): 295-309.

**Friday (October 14): Comic Relief Watching the Film: Rose Island**

**Assignment #2 – book review – due Monday October 17 at 17.00**

Browse 'glimpses of refugees' lives in camps': <https://refugeerpublic.submarinechannel.com/>

**Weeks 7-8: Exam period (no class)**

**Assignment #3 – concept note on your final paper – due Monday October 31 at 17.00**

### Week 9: Humanitarianism and Solidarity

#### **Wednesday (November 2): Q&A with Polly Pallister-Wilkins**

Danewid, Ida. 2017. White innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the erasure of history. *Third World Quarterly* 38(7): 1674-1689.

Ticktin, Miriam. 2006. Where ethics and politics meet. *American Ethnologist* 33(1): 33-49.

#### **Friday (November 4): Resisting oppressive mobility regimes**

Hadj Abdou, Leila, and Sieglinde Rosenberger. 2019. Contesting the deportation state? Political change aspirations in protests against forced returns. *Ethnic and racial studies* 42(16): 102-119.

Moulin, Carolina. 2012. Ungrateful Subjects? Refugee Protests and the Logic of Gratitude. In *Citizenship, Migrant Activism, and the Politics of Movement*, Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel (eds.). Abingdon: Routledge. Pp. 54-72.

### Week 10: Student Presentations

**Wednesday (November 9):** paper presentations + feedback from peers

**Friday (November 11):** paper presentations + feedback from peers

### Week 11: Student presentations

**Wednesday (November 16):** paper presentations + feedback from peers

**Friday (November 18):** paper presentations + feedback from peers

### Week 12: Student Presentations

**Wednesday (November 23):** paper presentations + feedback from peers

**Friday (November 25):** No Class – work on your paper

### Week 13: Student presentations

**Wednesday (November 30):** No class – work on paper, individual consultations

**Friday (December 2):** No class – work on paper, individual consultations

### Week 14: Final Meeting

#### **Wednesday (December 7): Where is the anthropologist?**

De León, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pittaway, Eileen, Linda Bartolomei, and Richard Hugman. 2010. 'Stop stealing our stories': The ethics of research with vulnerable groups. *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 2(2): 229-251.

\*\*\* A gift to those who would like to continue reading ☺  
Walia, Harsha. 2013. *Undoing border imperialism*. Ak Press. \*\*\*

**Friday (December 9):**

**Assignment #4 – Final paper is due today at 17.00**

The final paper must be submitted through Ouriginal (plagiarism detection program) on Canvas.

**Week 15: Friday (December 23):** Grades published

**Week 16: Tuesday (January 3):** Repaired papers are due today at 17.00