

Bucerius Young Scholar Forum & Lecture

October 17–19, 2018

University of California, Berkeley

Convener:

Andrea Westermann (GHI West)

Chairs:

Irene Bloemraad (UC Berkeley)

Donna Gabaccia (University of Toronto)

Barbara Lüthi (University of Cologne)

Florian Wagner (GHI West)

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Wednesday, October 17

10:00 – 10:30 **Welcome**

11:00 – 2:00 Bucerius Lecture with David Miliband and Jutta Allmendinger

2:15 – 4:00 **Panel A: Migrant Knowledges of Nature: Perspectives from Body and Labor History**

Benjamin Nobbs-Thiessen, *Settlers, Braceros, Narcos: "Horse and Buggy" Mennonites in Mexico, Canada, and the U.S., 1921-Present.*

In the early 1990s, reports that "traditional" Old Colony horse-and-buggy Mennonites were involved in an elaborate transnational smuggling ring that connected their well-established colonies in the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua and their new settlements in Ontario elicited shock from the Canadian media. Moving beyond sensationalism, this paper explores the multi-generational practices of transnational mobility that these low-German speaking, pacifist, Anabaptists forged and sustained over the twentieth century as they took on changing roles as settlers, migrant laborers (braceros) and smugglers.

Jordan Buchanan Smith, *The Invention of this Noble Liquor: Free and Coerced Migrants and the Creation of Rum*

This paper draws on rare books, legal records, plantation papers, deeds, and an array of secondary literature to detail the initial invention of rum on the Caribbean island of Barbados between 1627 and 1650. Rather than attributing the creation of this new alcoholic beverage (which quickly became an economically important commodity) to a single group of inventors, Smith argues that rum resulted from the convergence of at least four distinct knowledge cultures on the small island. In essence, Atlantic migration within the Americas and from Europe and Africa facilitated the invention of rum.

Comments: Onur Erdur and Lily Balloffet | Chair: Andrea Westermann

4:00 – 4:15 Coffee Break

4:15 – 6:00 **Panel B: (Im)Mobility Regimes: Geopolitical Calculations and Migrants' Tactics**

Stacy Fahrentold, *Banning Muslims by Executive Order: Immobilizing Ottoman Migrants through the Passport Regime in the United States, 1918-1924*

In WWI, the United States imposed travel restrictions on immigrants from the Ottoman Empire, prompting legal questions about whether the empire's non-Muslim migrants should be exempted. This paper examines U.S. laws exempting Syrian Arabs from wartime travel restrictions. It reveals a passport program that created a post-Ottoman "Syrian" nationality, impacting how nationality was granted in the Middle East after 1918.

Lily Balloffet, *Negotiating Exclusion: Arab Migration, Ethnicity, and Borders in Central America, 1890-1970*

This paper examines Middle Eastern migrants who circulated through the Caribbean Basin in the 20th century. Numerous state policies aimed to regulate or stem migrant mobility. This study contributes to a larger history of ethnic exclusion at a hemispheric scale and brings focus to a traditionally overlooked geography of Arabic-speaking migrants in the Americas.

Comments: Avi Sharma and Marcia C. Schenk | Chair: Donna Gabaccia

7:30 – 10:00 Dinner: Jupiter Restaurant, 2181 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

Thursday, October 18

9:00 – 10:45

Panel C: Displacement, Refuge: The Epistemological Stakes of Internal Migration

Risto Lenz, *"Where do we go from here?": Government-sponsored Folk Song Collecting and the Migrant Experience during the Great Depression*

Understanding folklore as a knowledge category, this paper argues that government-sponsored folk song collecting under the auspices of the New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA) had an impact on the preservation and dissemination of migrant voices. Focusing on two WPA projects in California, it discusses the shift in folklore scholarship from an interest in pioneer culture towards one of contemporary folk cultures.

Avi Sharma, *Migrant Epistemologies in Unstable Times. Identity and Allocated Scarcity in Germany and India, 1945-1952*

Using the cases of postwar Berlin between roughly 1945-48 and post-Partition Calcutta between roughly 1947 and 1952, this paper attempts to better understand the ways that "identity" and "vulnerability" differently constitute systemic exclusions. By focusing on strategies for securing livelihoods, and the logics of solidarity and difference in the context of mass displacement, this piece also tries to highlight the unstable boundaries between different categories of migrant.

Comments: Benjamin Nobbs-Thiessen and Jordan Buchanan Smith | Chair: Barbara Luethi

10:45 – 11:00

Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:45

Panel D: Migration and the Making of Disciplines: The Study of Mass Culture

Almuth Ebke, *Debating race: the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, the experience of migration and the production of knowledge in 1970s and 1980s Britain*

The terms "race" and "race relations" have taken on an important role in British sociological research since the 1950s, even though the exact way they were understood has changed over time. Using the discussions about race at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham and the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) as case studies, this paper argues that the researchers connected to the CCCS challenged essentialist understandings of "race", while militant researchers at the IRR championed a neo-Marxist analysis of race relations. These debates thus reveal a scholarly discipline where epistemological premises are being challenged. They also represent one step in the internal decolonization of the United Kingdom.

Joseph Malherek, *Critical Theory as Displaced Knowledge: Émigré Intellectuals from Central Europe and Their American Sponsors, 1933–45*

This paper examines the humanistic values and personal motives that drove officers of the Rockefeller Foundation and the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars in assisting exiles from National Socialism. Officers' values determined the scholarship of beneficiaries, among whom were Max Horkheimer and his Institute of Social Research, and Paul Lazarsfeld and his Bureau of Applied Social Research.

Comments: Stacy Fahrentold and Risto Lenz | Chair: Irene Bloemraad

12:45 – 2:00

Lunch

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2:00 – 3:45

Panel E: Migrant Knowledges: The Making of More than German Histories

Onur Erdur, *Political and Historical Knowledge of Migrants. The Case of the German Reunification 1989/90*

This paper explores the issue of political and historical migrants' knowledge in the context of the German culture of remembrance and politics of memory. To that end, it examines migrant memories and representations of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and German reunification in 1990 with a focus on Turkish migrants in West Berlin. Erdur argues that this approach not only constitutes a contribution to Germany's migration history but also offers an opportunity to practice contemporary history through the lens of migration history.

Marcia C. Schenck, *Remembering from Below, Forgetting from Above: Legacies of Mozambican and Angolan labor migration to the German Democratic Republic 1979-1990*

This paper discusses a book project on labor migration from Angola and Mozambique to the German Democratic Republic and back as remembered by the former migrants a quarter century after their return. Schenckl argues that their nostalgic memories serve to criticize the present governments for their failure to deliver on their promises of industrialization, work and a stable future.

Comments: Joseph Malherek and Almuth Ebke | Chair: Florian Wagner

3:45 – 4:00

Coffee Break

4:00 – 4:45

Concluding Discussion

7:30 – 10:00

Dinner: Comal Restaurant; 2020 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

Friday, October 19

10:00 – 1:00

Visit San Bruno Archives

Guided Tour, A Glimpse into the Collection, Exploratory Discussion on the Notion or Study of Migrant Archives (additional reading: Rothberg and Yildiz 2011)

Free Afternoon and Evening