



# UBC Migration

## May 2020 Newsletter

[website] [WWW.MIGRATION.UBC.CA](http://WWW.MIGRATION.UBC.CA)

### UBC Migration launches COVID-19 podcast series

UBC Migration is thrilled to announce its creation of a new podcast series entitled “Global Migration: COVID-19 and Beyond.” Exploring migration during the time of COVID-19, the series brings together a diverse array of experts to discuss the many ways the outbreak of the novel coronavirus is transforming global migration. With guests that include UBC Migration faculty and graduate students as well as local community organizers and practitioners, each episode explores a different theme related to the pandemic’s impact on temporary foreign workers and critical supply chains to immigrant services and the legal implications of closed borders for asylum seekers and refugees.

The first episode on student mobility and international education is now available on the UBC Migration website. It follows a conversation with Randall Martin, the Executive Director of the British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE) and Sandra Schinnerl, a PhD candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and a researcher in the Migration Cluster. They discuss how the closing of international borders, the rapidly evolving immigration policies that accompany them and the rapid transition to online learning is likely to have an enduring mark on the world of international education. During this freiform conversation, Martin and Schinnerl also assess the role of international students in the Canadian economy and the future of an open order that is under threat.

The second episode on precarious labour, temporary foreign workers and the politics of (in)equality is currently in post-production and will be available in early June. The conversation, hosted by Dan Hiebert, Professor of Geography, explores how COVID-19’s impact on global supply chains and precarious labour pools poses an acute risk for Canada and other countries around the globe and reveals not only the vital nature of these workers for the economy but also the deep inequities in Canada’s occupational health and safety systems. During the episode, Hiebert speaks with Aryan Karimi, Banting Postdoctoral Fellow in UBC Sociology, Bethany Hastie, Assistant Professor in the Allard School of Law and Bronwyn Bragg, a PhD candidate in UBC Geography.

Future episodes, to be recorded in early June, will feature discussions of the pandemic’s impact on immigrant communities, asylum seekers, displaced peoples and refugees in the lower mainland of BC, as well as critical analyses of the legal transformations taking place along the US-Canadian border.

Each of these podcasts will be hosted on UBC Migration’s COVID-19 Resources webpage, which launches in early June. The first episode is currently available, in the interim, via the ‘resources and opportunities’ section of our website.

### UBC Migration to add ‘Narratives’ Research Group

UBC Migration is establishing a new interdisciplinary research group. Called ‘Narratives,’ the group’s research will focus on the social, political, artistic, practical and theoretical implications pertaining to narratives of migration and the politics of belonging.

By investigating settler, migrant, refugee, and Indigenous narratives the Narrative Research Group will seek to identify alternative narratives that critically and constructively challenge Eurocentric notions of settlement, ownership, and identity. In order to foster a viewpoint of decolonized social belonging, it will question binary and place-based concepts of hybridity, diversity, integration, settlement and Indigenous belonging, as they appear in literature, film, and other media. The group aims to discuss a set of criteria for a transformative aesthetics that renegotiates and changes political perspectives, and thus plays a crucial part in challenging collective core narratives in plural societies.

Markus Hallensleben (CENES) serves as group lead. Other cluster members involved in the Narrative Research Group include Antje Ellermann (Political Science), Uma Kumar (CENES), Christopher Lee (English), Neila Miled (Education), Biz Nijdam (CENES), Francesca Pegorer (Anthropology), Rima Wilkes (Sociology), Gaoheng Zhang (FHIS), Sabine Zimmermann (CENES). Additional collaborators include Ajibola Fabusuyi and Dorothee Leising from CENES, Erin Goheen Glanville from Simon Fraser University, and Moritz Schramm from the University of Southern Denmark.

Researchers interested in joining the Narratives group are encouraged to reach out to Markus Hallensleben at [mhallen@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:mhallen@mail.ubc.ca)

The Narratives Research Group will be hosting a virtual conference on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 from 8:50 am to 12:30 pm. A full schedule and registration information for the conference, entitled *Postmigrant Aesthetics: How to Narrate a Future Europe?*, can be accessed at [blogs.ubc.ca/postmigrantaesthetics/](http://blogs.ubc.ca/postmigrantaesthetics/).

### Spring 2020 Workshop Award winners announced

Thank you to everyone who applied to the Spring 2020 Workshop Award Competition. These awards were designed to serve as catalysts for new research collaborations, and we are thrilled to announce that we were able to fund three fantastic proposals.

The first of these is an exciting project on the new media aesthetics of movement that is focused on the intersections of social media, digital technologies and contemporary migration and is organized by Elizabeth “Biz” Nijdam (UBC Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies) and Gaoheng Zhang (UBC Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies). The workshop is tentatively planned for March 2021.

The second workshop entitled “When Local Meets Transnational” and organized by Miu Chung Yan (UBC School of Social Work), Sean Lauer (UBC Department of Sociology) and Eric Fong (University of Hong Kong) will explore the reciprocal effects of immigrants circulating between Hong Kong and Canada. The event is set to be held in August 2020.

The last workshop, scheduled for April 2021 and organized by Antje Ellermann (UBC Political Science), Frederik Kohlert (University of East Anglia) and Mireille Paquet (Concordia University), will bring together a group of migration scholars and Vancouver-based artists to collaborate in the creation of migration narratives in comics form.

More information about these projects and related events will be posted on our website as further details emerge. Congratulations to our winners! And be on the lookout for a second competition this coming fall.

### Antje Ellermann and team of UBC Migration collaborators receive SSHRC Partnership Development Grant to study place-based identity and belonging in Vancouver

We are excited to announce that Migration Co-Director and Associate Professor in Political Science, Antje Ellermann has been awarded a three-year Partnership Development Grant (PDG) from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada. The project, entitled “Belonging in Unceded Territories,” will assemble a team of UBC researchers and practitioners from multiple community organizations across Metro Vancouver, including AMSSA (Association of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC), ISSoFBC (Immigrant Services Society of BC), and the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House. The purpose of the project is to better understand questions of place-based identity and belonging in Vancouver and to bring settler colonialism into the centre of debates on social belonging in British Columbia. The project asks what it means for today’s settlers—those who have lived here for generations and those who have just arrived—to acknowledge their position in relation to the Indigenous presence in these lands?

The interdisciplinary team includes ten members of UBC Migration, including the principal investigator, Antje Ellermann, co-investigators, Markus Hallensleben (Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies), Richard Johnston (Political Science), Sean Lauer (Sociology), Katie Rosenberger (AMSSA), Kathleen Sherrill (ISSoFBC) Matthew Wright (Political Science), Yang-Yang Zhou (Political Science), along with collaborators Sheryl Lightfoot (Political Science) and Rima Wilkes (Sociology).

The project will pursue three main objectives: 1) to better understand how different groups of Vancouver residents (Indigenous and non-Indigenous, native-born and immigrant) think about social and place-based connectedness and belonging on unceded territory; 2) to examine what drives these attitudes, and 3) to develop alternative narratives and experiences that can help inform and foster a decolonized social belonging.

Research for “Belonging in Unceded Territories” will commence summer 2020, and it will run until 2023. More information about the project, including future opportunities for graduate student training and public events, will be available on the UBC Migration website in the coming months.

UPCOMING

**Due to concerns over COVID-19, all upcoming events have been canceled.**

Look for future announcements via our mailing list or event webpage once scheduling resumes.

**RSVP online:**

[migration.ubc.ca/events](http://migration.ubc.ca/events)

### Student Feature Q&A with Max Cohen [Geography PhD]

#### **Routed: Migration and (Im)Mobility Magazine**

#### **Editor & Contributor**

**Tell us a little bit about the founding of *Routed* and the processes (initial and day-to-day) involved in running it and growing its readership.**

*Routed* began when a group of graduate students met in the Autumn of 2018 after finishing the Migration Studies and Forced Migration Studies master’s programmes at Oxford University. We felt during our master’s programmes there was substantial amounts of academic work on migration including ethnographic, sociological and geographical studies being ‘left on the shelf.’ We wanted to provide a platform where this work could be published to a non-academic audience and to challenge, and hopefully change, public discourse on migration which tends to be driven by xenophobia or abstracted from the realities of migration on the ground.

As the writers and editors live across the world, we work extensively with social media and sharing platforms to sustain communication across time-zones. We are all unpaid and the project requires significant amounts of time and money. However, our collective commitment to migration issues and the excitement generated from creatively developing the project means we have sustained momentum in writing and editing articles, attracting contributors, developing a team ethos, (trying to) establish a legal identity and organising the finances of our publication.

Articles are published in both English and Spanish, and we seek contributions from different languages around the world. We hope our project can expand opportunities for graduate students to publicise their work and build networks with people and places interested in migration and (im)mobility. In this way we want *Routed* to stand as a testament to the idea that master’s programmes can be more about the importance of sharing knowledge and ideas rather than simply stepping stones on to the career ladder. As well as writing, *Routed* is a multi-media publication and we encourage the contribution of artistic visualisations, drawings and graphs within articles or on their own. We also publish non-academic work including personal stories of migration.

**What interventions were you hoping to make with *Routed* in the fields of migration and mobility studies? How do you see your content contributing to, or maybe re-imagining, discourses around these topics?**

I think there are two key interventions we seek to make with *Routed*. First, there are significant gaps between the sorts of slow research and analysis demanded in an academic environment and the fast-paced sensationalism that pervade media headlines on migration. It is this divide that *Routed* seeks to bridge. Our word-limit on articles is relatively short at around 1,000 words. The task for writers is to think about the tensions inherent to and differing perspectives on an issue before making a concise argument in a popular style. It is a tall order, but the high calibre of our 9 issues has included eclectic mixes of personal stories, in-depth news analysis and cultural criticism.

Second, there is a political stance to *Routed*. We felt there was substantial evidence in academic work to challenge status-quo perceptions of migration as being a problem to be solved. In addition, we wanted to mainstream the idea that when we talk about migration and movement we should not only be talking about human movement. At *Routed* we embrace the idea that migration, conventionally understood as a human moving from one area to another usually across a border for a meaningful length of time, is only one part of the constant universal flow of materials and ideas. Our issues so far have covered topics including ‘Climate Change and mobilities, Love, Family and Friendships,’ and ‘Vehicles of Mobility.’

**You mentioned to me that the magazine has greatly expanded recently. Can you say a little more about that?**

Since our first issue last year, *Routed* has published 9 issues with 69 articles. We are building a social media presence with close to 1,000 followers on Facebook and Twitter and goals for increasing engagement every month. Our daily posts, which feature work published with *Routed* but also migration-related news that have otherwise received little exposure, reach up to 15,000 people every day.

Social media has been useful for sharing our publications and developing networks with migration specialists and migrant activist groups. Some original members of the magazine have moved on due to professional commitments and I myself have reduced my time commitments with *Routed* after beginning the PhD. But our affiliation with the masters’ programmes at Oxford has meant we have had new members of successive cohorts joining the magazine in 2019 and 2020 with fresh ideas and communication acumen for building our presence and sharing content online. Publications have also increased in stature.

I am currently reviewing two pieces by assistant professors based in Canada on the impact of COVID on forms of mobility, which has been an intimidating but rewarding experience! We hope the magazine continues to grow in the future.

**What issues or topics are you currently highlighting or looking to feature in upcoming issues? How can one submit to the magazine?**

The COVID pandemic is of course on everyone’s minds. We were contacted by one of the previous convenors of the Migration Studies programme to publish an issue on the topic and we reoriented our publication timeline to publish on this important issue. On June 20, we will be publishing over 40 articles on the impact of the COVID lockdown on different forms of labour mobilities, immigration detention and academic fieldwork. The COVID pandemic also means *Routed* will host the digital Oxford Migration Conference 2020, in collaboration with the Oxford Migration Studies Society. *Routed* will be publishing a special issue featuring the full articles, videos, and creative submissions on May 29.

If you want to join us on the *Routed* journey, keep an eye on our [web and] social media pages ([routedmagazine.com](http://routedmagazine.com) and @RoutedM) or subscribe to our newsletters. You will be kept updated on our publications and be notified of new Calls for Submissions. Once you have heard about our calls, submitting to the magazine is easy – just send an abstract to [routedmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:routedmagazine@gmail.com). We look forward to receiving more submissions and ideas for the magazine in the future!

### Faculty Feature Book Q&A with Renisa Mawani [Sociology]

#### **Across Oceans of Law: The Komagata Maru and Jurisdiction in the Time of Empire**

#### **Duke University Press**

**What are the major themes and takeaways in *Oceans of Law*?**

*Across Oceans of Law* follows the voyage of the British-built and Japanese-owned steamship the *Komagata Maru*. It takes a well-known event - the 1914 arrival of a vessel chartered by railway contractor and purported rubber planter, Gurdit Singh, carrying 376 Punjabi migrants from Hong Kong to Vancouver - and situates it within maritime worlds. By centering the many lives of the ship and the ocean regions it crossed, the book reorients the *Komagata Maru*’s passage from the optics of landfall, immigration, and nationality that have been so persistent in scholarly accounts, and retells the ship’s journey as a as maritime colonial legal history.

One of the book’s primary objectives is to critically examine the European myth of the “free sea,” a legal concept introduced by Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius in his 1609 text *Mare Liberum*. Over the course of the voyage, Gurdit Singh argued that as British subjects, he and the passengers had the right to travel freely across the empire. While many scholars have made this point, *Across Oceans of Law* examines his claims to mobility not only across land but also sea. By crossing the Pacific, Gurdit Singh and the passengers challenged European legal conceptions of the sea, intensifying border controls in Canada and India, and all at great personal costs.

By tracing the movements of *Law* in the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans into conversation with the Mediterranean Sea. In so doing, it opens opportunities to explore interconnections between these ocean regions and their respective histories of colonial dispossession, racial violence, and anticolonial struggle.

**Where would you situate *Oceans of Law* in the larger field of Migration Studies? How do you see it contributing to contemporary debates?**

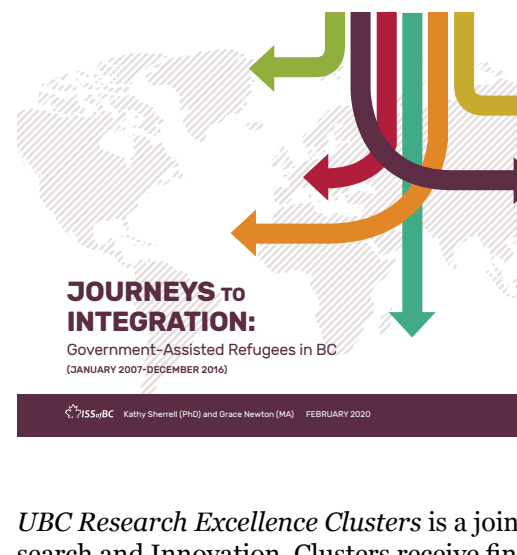
*Across Oceans of Law* is set in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, it is very much a reflection on present conditions, especially the escalation of racial violence directed at migrants in the Mediterranean. Oceans have long been central to patterns of mobility and to border control practices. Yet, they are not often foregrounded in studies of migration. Though not all migrant routes are maritime routes, what western states call “migrant crises” are unfolding in several ocean arenas. Today, these are most visible in the Mediterranean and the (South) Pacific, in Australia’s off shore detention facilities.

In the past two decades, it is estimated that more than 20,000 people have died in the Mediterranean while trying to reach Europe from North Africa and the Middle East. According to the Missing Migrants Project, 3,139 migrant deaths were reported in 2017 alone. Given the problems with data collection, these numbers are surely underestimates. In my book I argue that these contemporary conditions of maritime violence must be situated historically within jurisdictional struggles over land, sea, and territorial waters, lines that were legally formalized in the European imagination during the early seventeenth century. The deaths along the Mediterranean, as I read them, are part of a much longer colonial history of maritime security aimed at protecting the freedom of (European) trade and mobility.

**What was the research process like for *Oceans of Law*? Were there any methodological challenges?**

The book took nearly a decade to research and write. It is a multi-sited study that draws from libraries and archives in Vancouver, Ottawa, London, Glasgow, and Delhi. The book’s conceptual frame is inspired by historical details of the vessel and its many owners; the radical imaginaries of key figures on the ship and on shore; the legal and jurisdictional disputes that the *Komagata Maru*’s voyage engendered; and the role of maritime law in regulating Indian migration.

Drawing on what I term “oceans as method,” I ask how we might think *with* the sea, both materially and metaphorically, and in ways that bring multiple histories of racial and colonial violence together with the same analytic frame. My method draws on historical description to develop analytic arguments that also carry ethical and political implications. Through close narration, I hope readers will visualize other spaces of empire (oceans and ships) and the struggles and solidarities they produced.



As I researched the book, I was stunned by how much knowledge Indians in India and the diaspora had of British colonial rule in historical periods and places. Some were familiar with the horrors of transatlantic slavery and connected it to Indian indenture while others were attentive to the ongoing efforts to deteriorialize Indigenous peoples in Canada, Australia, and South Africa. These are significant and inspiring historical, analytical, and political connections that many of us are still struggling to make today, especially in the field of migration studies.

**Do you have any future plans to continue this research project?**

My current book, *Enemies of Empire*, is a sequel to *Across Oceans of Law*. This new project focuses on two figures, Gurdit Singh and Marcus Garvey. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, these men initiated shipping lines – the Guru Nanak Steamship Company and the Black Star Line, respectively. Focused on different ocean regions, Singh and Garvey viewed trade, commerce, and migration as ways to mobilize against Anglo-imperial rule. Whereas Singh sought to transport Indian goods and passengers from Bombay to Brazil and Calcutta to Canada, Garvey’s ambitions were to use ships to trade, transport, and to create a global black economy. *Enemies of Empire* will trace the maritime ambitions of Gurdit Singh and Marcus Garvey, examining why their projects failed, what their initiatives can tell us about the European myth of the free sea, and how their activities might elucidate the relationship between capitalism and anticolonialism. Ultimately, the book will bring histories of Indian radicalism into conversation with the radical Black Atlantic.



**CALL**

for

**NEWS**

We invite all members of UBC Migration to send in news items for inclusion in our next newsletter. We look forward to receiving news about new publications, professional appointments, or other honors, conferences / workshops organized, and major grants received.

Please include “member news” in the subject line of your email. We look forward to hearing from you!

**email to: [admin.migration@ubc.ca](mailto:admin.migration@ubc.ca)**

### Post-Doc Opportunity || Uppsala Immigration Lab

The Uppsala Immigration Lab is accepting applications, until June 2, for a two-year postdoctoral position.

Uppsala Immigration Lab is a research initiative supported by the Chancellor of Uppsala University, the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the Department of Economics. The lab researches central social issues linked to migration and integration with quantitative emphasis and uses rich data and state-of-the-art methods to create new knowledge. UIL’s projects are run in collaboration with leading scholars in Sweden and abroad.

### Participants sought for study on nonresidents’ experience giving birth in Canada or the USA

Are you have children while you were you in Canada or the USA on a non-immigrant visa (such as a student, work, or visitor visa)? And you interested in talking about your migration and childbirth experiences with social science researchers? If so, we would like to hear from you.

You are invited to participate in a 1-2 hour interview where you will be asked questions about your history and experiences with immigration and childbirth. You will receive a \$30 gift card for your time.

The researchers conducting this study are: Dr. Amanda Cheong (Principal Investigator) (UBC Sociology), Dr. Yin-Yuan Chen (University of Ottawa), Dr. Megan Gaucher (Carleton University), Dr. Jamie Liew (University of Ottawa).

To find out more, please contact Dr. Amanda Cheong at [amanda.cheong@ubc.ca](mailto:amanda.cheong@ubc.ca).

This project is funded by the UBC SSHRC Explore Faculty of Arts Graduate Research Assistant Support Grant.

### Aude-Claire Fourot receives SSHRC Connection, Partnership Engage Grants

Aude-Claire Fourot, Associate Professor in Simon Fraser University’s Political Science Department, was recently awarded two SSHRC grants.

The SSHRC Connection Grant, awarded to support short-term events and outreach activities, will allow Fourot and partner organization Plan Urbanisme Construction Architecture to host a June 2021 Paris conference to address how cities are dealing with immigration and migration patterns. The conference, in particular, aims to take stock of research addressing the ‘local turn’ of migration policies by focusing on the roles of networks and multi-level governance arrangements, as well as foster dialogue between disciplines, methods, and actors involved in the governance of migration.

The SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant will support Fourot’s partnered research with DIVERSEITY, a Surrey-based youth community resources society. She says the project’s overall goal “is to incorporate the voices of youth, seniors and mothers of young children with a refugee experience by asking about their definition of ‘sense of belonging’ and what fosters or hinders their sense of belonging to Canada. Focus groups with these three categories of refugees will be used to uncover the following: (i) definitions of belonging; (ii) types of programming which may influence their sense of belonging; (iv) and the extent to which there is a ‘duty to belong. We will analyze the results in examining whether the meaning of belonging varies over time and how differences among groups and individuals (age, entry status, etc.) might influence feelings of belonging.”

### Recent Publications from Cluster Members

#### **Peer-Reviewed**

Parajulee, R., **Sheiderman, S.** & Shrestha, R.K. (2020). “Forging community through disaster response: Nepali-Canadians and the 2015 earthquakes.” *BC Studies*, 205.

Diaspora communities often play an important role in responding to disasters in their home countries. From fundraising, to providing direct relief, to offering advisory and translation services to humanitarian organizations, to speaking with the media, movements of crisis provide diverse opportunities for community engagement. In so doing, such moments of rupture may themselves work to forge diaspora identities. We argue that this was indeed the case for the Nepali-Canadian community in British Columbia. The experience of responding to the 2015 earthquakes enabled consolidation of an emergent South Asian identity in Canada, as it brought Nepali-Canadians into new relationships with each other, their home country, and other South Asian communities. Written collaboratively by a political scientist, an anthropologist and an economist (two of whom are Nepali-Canadians, with the third being an American anthropologist of Nepal who is now a permanent resident of Canada), this paper draws upon multiple disciplinary approaches to investigate disaster response within the Nepali-Canadian community in British Columbia. In so doing, it provides the first ever scholarly introduction to the Nepali community of BC.

#### **Articles**

**Hastie, B.** (2020). “The coronavirus reveals the necessity of Canada’s migrant workers.” *The Conversation*.

**Hastie, B.** (2020). “What do recent changes to the Employment Standards Act mean for BC workers?” *Policy Note*.

**Karimi, A. & Wilkes, R.** (2020). “COVID-19 does not care about residency status.” *openDemocracy*.

**Sheiderman, S., Baniya, J. & Le Billion, P.** (2020). “Learning from disasters: Nepal copes with coronavirus 5 years after earthquake.” *The Conversation*.

#### **Books**

#### **A Companion to Greeks Across the Ancient World**

#### **Wiley-Blackwell**

**Franco De Angelis** (Editor)

A Companion to Greeks Across the Ancient World explores the mobility and migration of Greeks who left their homelands in the ten centuries between the Early Iron Age and the Hellenistic period.

While most academic literature centers on the Greeks of the Aegean basin area, this unique volume provides a systematic examination of the history of the other half of the ancient Greek world. Contributions from leading scholars and historians discuss where migrants settled, their new communities, and their connections and interactions with both Aegean Greeks and non-Greeks.



#### **Reports**

#### **Journeys to Integration: government-assisted refugees in BC**

#### **ISS of BC**

**Kathy Sherrill & Grace Newton**

This report focuses on the integration experiences of government-assisted refugees (GARs) who settled in British Columbia between January 2007 and December 2016. After briefly summarizing literature on the development of integration as a concept and previous studies undertaken in the Canadian context, we present the results of mixed-method fieldwork completed from January through September 2019.

#### **A COMPANION TO**

#### **GREEKS ACROSS**

#### **THE ANCIENT WORLD**

EDITED BY  
FRANCO DE ANGELIS

