African slavery: violent uprooting and dispersal

When we think of “displacement” we are more likely to associate the term with an involuntary movement of individuals or populations from a concrete and stable place, land/territory, a home or homeland, village, city or region. Displacement may be within the borders of a state (internal displacement) or across borders (refugees). As for “Diaspora” it evokes the idea that a population has long been displaced and dispersed (scattered) across many countries. One of the early definitions of diaspora is that the scattered population share a mythical or ancient place of origin, or a traumatic event and thus historical memory. Originally from the Greek word *diaspeirein*, (*dia* means “across” and *speirein* both to sow and to scatter seeds) it was initially intended to describe a grievable and lamentable condition. Like all concepts, however, the definition of diaspora, its uses (and abuses), its meaning(s) changes over time. Poststructuralist and postcolonial theorists inject the term diaspora with a radicalism proposing diasporic populations challenge unitary identities, origins, homelands or national belongings and autochthony. According to these scholars, diasporic encounters map new forms of identification, and configure new political projects that chart new ways of being. The course examines some of the arguments, while emphasizing the diverse trajectories, histories and political aspirations of diasporic and displaced populations. We underscore the significance of politics, power structures, and various forms of imperial domination, and socio-economic differentials in informing the experiences of displacement and protracted the formation of a diaspora. Yet boundary crossings do not necessarily mean we also journey ideologically or politically towards global citizenship, or do they? We cover topics that include conceptual definitions and critiques, gender and generation, trauma, memory and identity and settler-colonial displacements among others. Students will have the flexibility to also introduce their own readings that reflect their areas of research.

*Please note that some articles might be replaced to reflect student areas of interests.*
**Week 1 Sept 15 Introductions, orientation and distribution of readings**

Introducing each other and organizing how we want to proceed with readings and discussions, expectations, and assignments.

**Week 2 Sept 22 Contexts, Definitions, Concepts, Critiques**

Clifford, James  

Rogers Brubaker  

Gupta, Akhil  

**Week 3 Sept 29 Contexts, Concepts, Critiques**

Suzanne Scafe & Leith Dunn  

Grosfoguel, Ramon, Laura Oso and Anastasia Christou  

Ndhlovu, Finex .  

**Week 4 Oct 6 Settler-Colonialism: Displacement and Dispossession**

McCrossan, Michael  

Wolfe, Patrick  

**Week 5 Oct 13 Colonial Landscapes, Racism and Displacement**


**Week 6 Oct 20 Displacement: History/Memory, Identity**


Week 7 Oct 27 Diaspora, Home and Homeland

Pang, Bonnie

Olsson, Erik

Bose, Dr Pablo Shiladitya

Week 8 Nov 3 Reading Week

Week 9 Nov 10 Diaspora Migration, Gender and Generation

Ifekwunigwe, Jayne O.

Sirma Bilge & Ann Denis PhD

Shami, Seteney

Gamage, Shashini

Week 10 Nov 17 States, Citizens and the “others”

Grewal, Inderpal
Nyers, Peter

Adams, Vincanne, Taslim Van Hattum, Diana English

Jauhiainen, Jussi S.

**Week 11 Nov 24 Diaspora and Trauma**

Kuradusenge-McLeod

Martinez, Shantel

Shani, Giorgio

**Week 12 Dec 1 The Concept Refugee**

Arendt, Hanna

Agamben, Giorgio
1995 We Refugees. Symposium. 49(2): 114-119, at: [http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/we-refugees/](http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/we-refugees/)

Houtum, Henk van
Farzana, K.F.

**Week 13 Dec 8 OPEN DISCUSSION**

Open Class Discussion

### Assignments, Evaluations, Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments and Discussion: 50%</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 written commentaries: 10%</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper: 40%</td>
<td>Week 5 and 10</td>
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<td>Week 13 – Exam period class</td>
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**Participation, Presentations and Discussion:** This course depends on your attendance and full active participation and contribution to class discussions. Make sure the readings are done before class. Please make an extra effort not to miss classes. Each student is expected to present and/or participate in class discussions on a weekly basis. Readings will be distributed so that each student has the same number of presentations as all others. Presentations should include a brief summary followed by the student’s critical assessment of the article or chapter, and questions for the class to debate. Please prepare a written summary (approximately a page) of your presentation including the questions, to post online at the beginning of each class.

**Two Written Commentaries:** Choose a contemporary/historical issue to write a brief critical commentary (one to two paragraphs) related to displacements and diasporas. For example, Covid-19 and Mexican laborers in the US, displacement and environmental disasters, gendered displacements, a particular refugee group such as the Rohingyans, or stateless populations. First commentary is due week 5 and the second is week 10. We can post these commentaries online so that we all benefit from the exchange of ideas.

**Term Paper (12-15 pages):** Choose a topic related to the course and ideally one that also deals with your area of interest or research. Begin research and writing early on in the term.

*ENJOY THE COURSE AND BEST OF LUCK!*
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations:

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment’s due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western’s current academic policies regarding medical accommodation, accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences in Western’s Academic Calendar by clicking on this link:

http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/academicPolicies.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=

~ END ~