

Contemporary Continental Philosophy: The Figure of the Migrant.

4:00 pm - 5:50 pm TR | Sturm Hall 258

Winter Quarter 2012

PHIL 3111 - 1

Thomas Nail | thomas.nail@du.edu

Office: 382 Sturm, 303-871-4917

Office Hours: 12-1pm TR

Course Description.

“A specter haunts the world . . . and it is the specter of migration”—Hardt and Negri, *Empire*

“Immigrants, today’s proletarians” —Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe*

“The concrete articulation of [the demands of thousands of foreigners in our countries] defines what is most important in politics today” — Alain Badiou, *The Meaning of Sarkozy*

“It is even possible that, if we want to be equal to the absolutely new tasks ahead, we will have to abandon decidedly, without reserve, the fundamental concepts through which we have so far represented the subjects of the political (Man, the Citizen and its rights, but also the sovereign people, the worker, and so forth) and build our political philosophy anew starting from the one and only figure of the refugee?” —Giorgio Agamben, *Radical Thought in Italy*.

The 21st Century has been described as the century of “people on the move” by UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres. Some 11 million people are refugees worldwide, fleeing political violence and/or persecution at home, while more than 20 million are internally displaced within the borders of their own countries. Accordingly, the figure of the migrant/refugee has emerged as one of the most important, if not *the* most important, political figures of contemporary continental philosophy. Despite differences in philosophical orientation, thinkers such as Gilles Deleuze, Judith Butler, Jacques Rancière, Julia Kristeva, Alain Badiou, and Jacques Derrida, have all written at length on the centrality of the figure of the migrant for contemporary political thought. Not only does the figure of the migrant define the people of our time, according to many of these authors, it also defines a positive political way forward. This course thus provides not only a survey of the different traditions in contemporary European philosophy over the last twenty years (post-structuralism, deconstruction, neo-classicism, post-marxism, third-wave feminism) but also offers a thematic look at the politico-philosophical figure of the migrant and other issues related to migration (human rights, borders, camps, sovereignty, territory, nomadism, and resistance).

Required Readings.

All texts are available as pdf’s on Blackboard under “Course Readings.” Students are expected to print these texts and bring them to class every day. All texts in the reading are required reading.

Recommended Readings.

Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien*

Course Requirements.

	Undergraduate.	Graduate.
1. participation	10%	20%
2. midterm and final essays (6-7 pages)	90%	
3. term paper prospectus & annotated bibliography		20%
4. final term paper (12-14 pages)		60%

Participation/Attendance: You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing three classes for any reason will result in a 1/3 grade reduction (B+ to B). An additional 1/3 grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. You will be expected to document your presence in class by signing a daily roll sheet. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% (UG) or 20% (G) of your final grade. In addition to any penalties that you receive for failure to attend class, absences from class will also negatively affect your participation grade.

Midterm and Final Essays (undergraduates only): A midterm and final essay on assigned topics are due on the dates specified on the course outline. The last essay is due on the date assigned for the final examination. Essays should be (6–7) pages with standard fonts and margins. Assignments for these essays will be posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance of the due date. All written work must be typed, stapled, double-spaced, and proof-read. Essays cannot be accepted by email. Essays are due in class on the day assigned and will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Each essay is worth 45% of your final grade.

Term Paper Prospectus (graduate students only): You will submit, in the 9th week, a prospectus of your final paper with two components: (1) a 2-3 page detailed description of the topic and outline of your proposed argument; and (2) an annotated bibliography of five peer-reviewed secondary texts you intend to consult. Each annotation should be around one double-spaced page and include a summary of the article as well as an indication of its relevance for your project. Your prospectus must receive my approval in order for your final term paper to be accepted. The prospectus will be worth 20% of your final course grade.

Final Term Paper (graduate students only): Graduate students will complete a final 12–14 page term paper. Final papers will explore a specific independently-chosen topic or theme from the course in detail and must include (a) examination of at least five scholarly secondary sources in addition to primary texts, and (b) the development of your own original position or critical response. Term papers must be stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and use a standard system of citation (APA or Chicago). Papers are due on the date scheduled for the final exam, and extensions will be granted only in the case of genuine, documented emergencies. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Your term paper will count for 60% of your final course grade.

Policies.

Incompletes and extensions will be given only in the event of documented emergencies.

Retaining copies of all coursework: Please retain copies of all work submitted and the original copy of all work returned to you during the term until the final course grade has been posted. In the event of any question concerning whether grades have been accurately recorded, it is your responsibility to provide these copies as documentation.

Computers and other electronic equipment: Use of electronic equipment, including cell phones, pagers, MP3 players, AND LAPTOP COMPUTERS is prohibited during this class. Exceptions to the prohibition of laptops may be requested from the instructor and will be granted only for legitimate academic reasons. Use of laptops for academic reasons will be monitored throughout the term, and failure to restrict their use to this function will result in the revocation of any laptop privileges.

Email: Please check your email regularly, I will be emailing you at your du.edu address.

Academic Honesty: Please review and familiarize yourself with the provisions of the University of Denver Honor Code regarding academic honesty. You can find a summary in each term's Schedule of Classes or at: <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/ccs/2010--2011%20Honor%20Code.pdf>. Violations of academic honesty will be met with disciplinary action (the usual punishment is an "F" for the course). Definitions and examples of plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating are posted on Blackboard.

Inclement Weather: It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Blackboard and through the Blackboard email system.

Individual Differences: If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. If you have a documented disability that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your abilities, you should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure your full participation and facilitate your education process. The university offers a wide range of services to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements. Students may also contact the Disability Services Program (DSP) by email dsp@du.edu, phone (303-871-2278), or in person. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities and is located on the 4th floor of Ruffatto Hall, 1999 E. Evans Ave. DSP -- 303.871. 2278 / 7432 / 2455. Information is also available on line at <http://www.du.edu/disability/dsp>; see the Handbook for Students with Disabilities.

Reading Schedule. (schedule is subject to changes made by the instructor)

Unit	Week	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Unit 1 Human Rights	Week 1	1/3	Introductions, syllabus, course readings and expectations.	
		1/5	Hannah Arendt, 'The Perplexities of the Rights of Man', in <i>Imperialism, Part II of The Origins of Totalitarianism</i> . pp. 269–302.	
	Week 2	1/10	Jacques Rancière, "Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?" 297–310.	
		1/12	Hannah Arendt, <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> "We refugees" 110–119. Giorgio Agamben, <i>Means Without Ends</i> "Beyond Human Rights" 15-28	
Unit 2 Borders and Camps	Week 3	1/17	Étienne Balibar, <i>Politics and the Other Scene</i> "What is a Border?" 75–86. Giorgio Agamben, "What is a Camp?" 37–45.	
		1/19	Wendy Brown, <i>Walled States, Waning Sovereignty</i> 7–30.	
	Week 4	1/24	William Connolly, "The Complexity of Sovereignty" 23–42.	
		1/26	Giorgio Agamben, <i>State of Exception</i> , pp. 1-31.	
Unit 3 Sovereignty, Territory, Control	Week 5	1/31	Didier Bigo, "Detention of Foreigners, States of Exception, and the Social Practices of Control of the Banopticon" 5–30.	
		2/2	Michel Foucault, <i>Security, Territory, Population</i> 1–35.	
	Week 6	2/7	Stuart Elden, "Terror and territory" 821–835.	
		2/9	Gilles Deleuze, "Control and Becoming" and "Post-scripts on Societies of Control" in <i>Negotiations</i> 169–182.	Midterm Paper Due (undergrad)
Unit 4 Migrants and Nomads	Week 7	2/14	Étienne Balibar, "What We Owe to the Sans-Papiers" 42–43. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, <i>A Thousand Plateaus</i> 380–400.	
		2/16	No class	
	Week 8	2/21	Michel Hardt and Antonio Negri <i>Empire</i> 205–218 and <i>Commonwealth</i> 133–149.	
		2/23	Engin F. Isin and Kim Rygiel, 'Abject Spaces: Frontiers, Zones, Camps' in <i>Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror</i> , pp. 181-203.	
Unit 5 Refuge and Resistance	Week 9	2/28	Jacques Derrida, <i>On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness</i> 3–24.	
		3/1	Peter Nyers, "Community without Status: Non-Status Migrants and Cities of Refuge" 121–138.	Paper Proposal Due (Grad only)
	Week 10	3/6	"Building Sanctuary City NOII-Toronto on Non-Status Migrant Justice Organizing" (Round-table interview) Alain Badiou, <i>The Meaning of Sarkozy</i> "Only One World" 53–70.	
		3/8	Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak, <i>Who Sings the Nation State?</i> 1–43.	
		3/15	Final Essay due.	Final Essay Due (grad and undergrad)