

## **The Migrant Body in South-South Migrations Conference**

### **University of Manchester**

Manchester, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Kanaris lecture theatre, Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

*With the generous support to the University of Manchester's Hallsworth Conference Fund and the British Academy Conference Award*

### **Convenor**

Tanja Bastia, University of Manchester

### **Photo competition jury**

Erika Busse, Associate Professor, Sociology, Macalester College

María Calderón Muñoz, Independent Researcher

Verónica Castro, Visual Anthropologist and Film Director

### **Photo exhibition**

Curated by Verónica Castro

The migrant body has long been a site of struggle and activism. Only recently, however, has it become the focus of sustained migration research. Research conducted so far also tends to prioritise migrant experiences in Europe and the US, meaning analysis of migration within the Global South is both urgent and necessary.

This conference has two aims. At the conceptual level, it aims to advance an intersectional understanding of the migrant body that considers how gender, race, sexual identity, and other social and political categories interact to shape migrant experiences. To achieve this, the conference will bring together a range of disciplinary perspectives, including geography, anthropology, development studies, and the literary and visual arts.

At the empirical level, the presentations and complementary visual programme will consider migrations that take place within or between regions of the Global South. We will bring together emerging and established scholars from both the Global South and the Global North to explore the potential of the migrant body as a starting point for analysing how migrants encounter and navigate various forms of (dis)advantage throughout their migration journeys, including the migrant body as a site of resistance.

## Programme

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December

9:00 Registration open

9:30 Welcome by Tanja Bastia

10:00 Keynote: **Embodied Borders, Body Politics, and Authoritarian Capitalism**,  
**Professor Nina Glick Schiller** (Zolberg Institute for Migration and Mobility, New School  
University, NY)

11:00 Coffee

11:15 – 13:00 Panel 1

### Postcolonial approaches, legal contexts and class

**Chair: Elena Barabantseva**, University of Manchester

**Marcia Vera Espinoza and Vania Reyes Muñoz**, Institute for Global Health and Development,  
Queen Margaret University (MVE) | Centro COES (VRM), ‘Gobernanza encarnada’: migration  
governance and the embodied experiences of Venezuelan migrants in Chile

**Mayssa Joabli**, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa, A ‘Petit Récit’ of the  
Postcolonial Migrant Body and Beyond

**Murtaza Mohiqi**, University of Agder, Norway, Governing the datafied migrant body in South–  
South migration

**Lorena Izaguirre**, CIRFASE, UCLouvain, Belgium, The citizen's body, the migrant's habitus: class  
and embodiment in Venezuelan displacement

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Film screening and discussion

### **MIGRANTS: We Cannot Be Sad Here and In Plain Sight, Malaysia**

*Directed by Sheril A. Bustaman* (joining online)

**Migrants: We Cannot Be Sad Here**, sheds light onto the violence faced and endured by male  
Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia. The short film follows the stories of three men in different  
fields of work who share their emotional and physical struggles as male migrant workers.

**MIGRANTS: In Plain Sight** dives into the unspoken sacrifices of female Nepali migrant women's  
choice to migrate, and how they adapt their mind and bodies to pragmatically survive the  
experience.

15:00 Coffee

15:15 -17:00 Panel 2

### **Internal migration, displacement and resistance**

**Chair: Oliver Bakewell**, University of Manchester

**Ayesha Pattnaik**, University of Oxford, Outsider within: learning to be an internal migrant

**Marzana Kamal, Stefy Joseph, Susmita Paul, Rishvanth Mucheli**, Liverpool Hope University, “I don’t want my children to be grown up as garbage collectors”: lives of Bangladeshi irregular workers in Bangalore, India

**Marielys Padua Soto**, The American University in Cairo, The smuggled body: race, embodied violence, and survival on the Sudan – Egypt smuggling routes

**Luis Eduardo Perez Murcia**, University of Manchester, ‘Uprooted from my body’: Experiences of rape-induced displacement, sex work and home

**Yvonne Riaño**, University of Neuchatel / Bern, Women’s bodies as site of agency and resistance in forced migrations between Colombia and Venezuela

17:00 -19:00 Photo exhibition with winning entries of the photo competition on the Migrant Body in South-South migration, with music from University of Manchester’s klezmer ensemble, **The Michael Kahan Kapelye**, and drinks reception.

Introduction to the photo competition: **Maria Calderón**, Independent Researcher

Introduction to the photo exhibition: **Verónica Castro**, Visual Anthropologist and Film director

Introduction to Klezmer ensemble: **Richard Fay**, Reader in Intercultural Education, Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester

The University of Manchester’s klezmer ensemble, **The Michael Kahan Kapelye**, was founded in 2011 by Richard Fay and Ros Hawley (freelance klezmer clarinetist and music educator) and is linked to an undergraduate music module in Klezmer Ensemble Performance. It was named after local classical and klezmer violinist who was tragically killed in act of random street violence in 2008. The ensemble now has its 15th generation of music students passing through its ranks. The 15th generation of The Michael Kahan Kapelye comprises ten music students in their 2nd and 3rd year of undergraduate study. Each year, the ensemble works with whatever collection of instruments the students bring with them, and this results in some eclectic combinations. Many of the ensemblists choose to explore a relatively unknown instrument for them, e.g, one of this year’s pianists is exploring playing piano accordion, another is trying out the hammered dulcimer, and the slide trombone player is experimenting with battered brass instruments including helicon and valve trombone. Not only are the students being immersed in the unfamiliar music culture of klezmer, and doing so in culturally-, historically-, and musically-informed manner, they are also exploring this on unfamiliar instruments in some cases, and doing so in new performance contexts. The ensemble provides them with an opportunity to

practise intercultural musicking, developing in the process their intercultural awareness as well as their transmusicality.

## **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December**

9:00 Arrival and welcome to second day, Tanja Bastia

9:15 – 11:00 Panel 3

### **Age and sexuality**

**Andrea Cortes Saavedra**, Universidad de O'Higgins, Producing, embracing and resisting cultural distinctions and racial hierarchies in a school in Northern Chile: migrant children, school habitus and colonial intersectionality

**Valentina Biondini**, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas / Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires, The migrant child's body: care regimes in Northern Chile

**Nay Myo Htet**, University of Manchester, Between hiding and rising: Myanmar young people navigating development in Mae Sot Thailand

**Aija Lulle**, University of Eastern Finland, A migrant's body: affective inquiry in gendered intrasections

**Jasmin Lilian Diab**, Institute for Migration Studies, Lebanese American University, Femme, queer and disqualified: refugee credibility and the gendered gaze

11:00 Coffee

11:15 -13:00 Panel 4

### **Work and health**

**Anand Panamthottam Cherian**, George Mason University, Embodied insecurity: food, precarity, and the gendered politics of care in the Kerala-Gulf migration corridor

**Yiqiu Huag**, University of Hong Kong, Mobilized body, moralized body, migrant body: Indonesian migrant domestic workers and their holistic health, experiences of violence in Hong Kong

**Andrea Souto García**, Universidade da Coruña, Bodies at stake: exploring body borderisation and body unstable strategies of Brazilian and Colombian migrant women

**Valquiria Almeida**, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Open wounds and border-bodies: impacts of forced migration on the health and sociability of Venezuelan couples in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, Brazil

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Film and discussion

**MIGRANT BODY : ABDULAI and ELHADJI, BINTA, AND AWA / Cape Verde**

FILM PRODUCED AND MADE BY Verónica Castro and Helena Inverno

**ABDULAI / Cape Verde / 24' / 2025**

Originally from Guinea Konakri, Abdulai learned his craft in Gambia before becoming a household name in Mindelo, a port city in Cape Verde. He knows the art of cutting and sewing. As a tailor and a migrant, he restitches the fabric on the relations between researcher and the researched.

**ELHADJI, BINTA, AND AWA / Cape Verde / 15' / 2025**

“No stress Cabo Verde” is the national motto for Cape Verde. Originally from Senegal, Elhadji, Binta and Awa have neighbouring stalls at the Star Market (Mercado da Estrela) in Mindelo, a port city on São Vicente Island. Day in and day out, they help sell each other's African crafts and textiles to tourists and residents. The market is open every day and its labouring rhythm takes a toll on the body, nonetheless, there's something that unites them.

15:00 Coffee

15:15-17:00 Panel 5

**Migration otherwise: media, photography, visual representations and musicking**

**Amira Ousaifi**, Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences in Sousse, Tunisia, Narrating the migrant body: media representations and policy narratives of Sub-Saharan migrant women in the Maghreb region

**Suzana Ramos Coutinho**, Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Embodied borders: visual politics and racialized migrant bodies in the Haitian migration to Brazil

**Erika Busse**, Macalaster College, Framing Bodies, Framing Migration: The Use of Photography in Migration Research

**Caroline Bithell, Richard Fay and Alexander Gagatsis**, University of Manchester, The sounding body and the Diasporic experience: migration and musicking in the City

**Aoileann Ní Mhurchú**, University of Manchester, Solidarity as complex unruly love: how do we connect insights about decolonial practices of solidarity in vernacular music into mainstream discussions about alternative possibilities for 'national' solidarity ?

16:45 Wrap up and close