

# SEMINAR SERIES ON FORCED MIGRATION

## THE COLONIALITY OF MIGRATION

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Refugees and migrants are often studied as though they have no relation to the racial and class structures and histories of the societies in which they reside. They are taken to be external strangers to be governed by 'integration' policy and border management. I begin from the suggestion that migration, and in particular forced migration, can be usefully understood in relation to practices of material and cultural dispossession and value expropriation so as to ensure a

steady supply of cheapened labour power. These practices were central to the way colonial capitalism of the 19th and 20th centuries was organised, and I will argue that they remain pertinent to contemporary intersections of politics, economics and culture. The persistent coloniality of contemporary migration is evident in struggles to control and direct the social reproduction of culturally-demeaned others (including migrants and other racialised groups) with the aim of ensuring the regular supply of cheapened labour.

In the talk I will look at these dynamics in relation to three cases: (1) the control of indigenous migrant labour in tea plantations in the early 20th century in northeast India, (2) the control of sex workers in 20th century British Rangoon, and (3) the struggle to control the social reproduction of migrants that is central to notions and policies around contemporary 'European citizenship'.

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**WEDNESDAY ● JAN. 20, 2021 ● 5PM CET**

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**Online event**

**[Register here](#)**

