

Call for Papers

Rethinking Migration – Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Villa Vigoni

PhD Colloquium

26th February – 1st March 2024

Organisation: Prof. Dr. Roberta Picardi (Università degli Studi del Molise)
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Migration is one of the most discussed topics of our time: The unprecedented extent of refugee movements of past years has led to intense and controversial debates about immigration and emigration, flight and forced migration, integration and citizenship. Germany and Italy form epicenters of those discussions in continental Europe, each in different ways. In political philosophy, the interest in migration is not primarily driven by topicality, although it often gives cause for reflections, but migratory movements raise plenty of questions referring to diverse areas of research, such as methods for developing principles of right and justice, the explication of particular maxims of justice, the juridical or moral justification of borders and immigration politics, the legitimacy of particular immigration policies, as well as questions concerning the stability of political regimes or on the relation of state sovereignty to individual freedom.

Many of these questions are at the center of intense debates and, recently, the literature on migration has expanded exponentially. Contemporary articles, however, mostly ignore historical perspectives though they might in fact provide substantial arguments and insights. The PhD Colloquium will combine historical with systematic approaches and thus contribute to bridging this gap concerning migration.

This approach seems particularly fruitful, since migratory movements and obligations towards foreigners have been a subject of political philosophy all along: In *Nomoi*, for example, Plato discusses possible causes of migration, the advantages and disadvantages of cultural homogeneity in states and obligations towards foreigners and people seeking refuge. Seneca discusses what it means to leave one's homeland in *Ad Helviam matrem*. Augustine discusses questions of granting asylum in *De civitate Dei*; Thomas Aquinas discusses how to treat foreigners in *Summa Theologiae*. Early modern utopian writings – such as Morus' *Utopia*, Campanella's *La città del sole* or Bacon's *The New Atlantis* – entail ideas about the admission of foreigners and the benefits and harms of opening and closing borders. Similarly, theorists of modern sovereignty like Bodin or social contract theorists such as Hobbes, Locke or Rousseau are aware of migratory movements as a philosophical topic. International law theorists and French moralists examine colonialism in their writings, for example Vitoria in his lectures *De indis recenter inventis* or Montaigne in his *Essais* (cf. Reinhardt 2021, 19). Moreover, migration is a crucial theme in philosophical conceptions of history written in the

18th and 19th centuries – first “with a cosmopolitan purpose”, later with a nationalist perspective (cf. Picardi 2009, ch. V and VI).

Guiding questions for the colloquium, thus, will be:

- What are historical roots of the arguments produced in the contemporary philosophical debate on borders, migration and citizenship? Can we work out a critical genealogy of today’s positions?
- Which accounts from the history of philosophy are fruitful for current problems in migration ethics? Are there conceptual resources in historical positions that could be reactivated – maybe even new ways of dealing with current (theoretical and practical) challenges raised by migration?
- With respect to which (possibly up to now ignored) aspects of the historical positions considered in the colloquium can we gain a deeper understanding from the perspective of migration ethics?

12 PhD candidates will have the opportunity to present their own work on these and further questions. The colloquium includes keynotes by renowned philosophers and political theorists working on migration as well as plenty of room for informal exchange and net-working.

Presentations and discussions will be held in English. Abstracts and articles can be written in German, English and Italian.

Please submit an abstract (500 words max.) of your presentation to Johanna Sinn (johanna.sinn@uni-passau.de) by 15th September 2023. The invited PhD candidates will be asked to submit their complete articles for a presentation of 30 minutes by 15th February 2024.

Invited PhD candidates will be reimbursed for travel. The accommodation will be provided by the Villa Vigoni in cooperation with the DFG.