

# iPerspectives

AIAS Fellows' Magazine

Issue 2, AUTUMN 2020

## MIGRATION



**AIAS**  
AARHUS INSTITUTE  
OF ADVANCED STUDIES

# CONTENTS

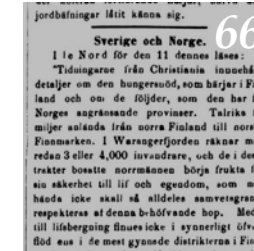
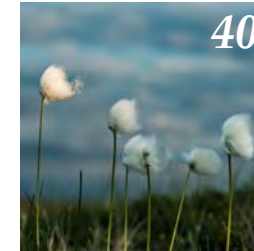
## THEME OF THIS ISSUE: MIGRATION

- 04 Foreword  
*Søren Rud Keiding*
- 07 Editors' Note  
*Cici Alexander, Jennifer Galloway,  
Joanna Kalucka, Kees van Kersbergen*

- 08 Migration and Geology: Musings on various time scales  
*Jennifer Galloway*
- 16 AIAS: it's just not quite the same  
*Joshua Nash*
- 18 Migration: yet another challenge to the welfare state?  
*Kees van Kersbergen*
- 23 Infectious Talk, Communicable Disease  
*Samuel McCormick*

- 30 Classical Literature & Irish Migration History  
*Isabelle Torrance*
- 35 Forced Migration: A brief account of an antiquity looted from Greece  
*Christos Tsirogiannis*
- 40 Tundra in transition  
*Jeffrey Kerby*
- 51 Migration and Scholarship  
*Franco De Angelis*

- 55 Feeling protected? Closed borders in the coronavirus crisis  
*Isabel Kusche*
- 60 Between Representation and Repression: Some notes on the refugees to Europe  
*Tijen Tunali*
- 66 Fear and loathing at 70° North  
*Andrew Newby*
- 71 Space, the final frontier. But, should we venture NOW?  
*Alfonso Blázquez-Castro*



# FOREWORD

At the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies interdisciplinarity is ubiquitous. Be it the AIAS Fellows' Seminars, the lunches or maybe just a random encounter in front of the coffee machine at the institute - naturally adhering to the current corona physical distancing - the scientific discussions and interactions are always interdisciplinary. Often, it is a common scientific problem or societal challenge, which is addressed by several disciplines, providing new angles, deeper insights, and often better solutions. At other times, the interdisciplinary discussion revolves around a common concept or word, used throughout science, but with astonishingly different meanings.

This second issue of *iPerspectives* from the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies is focused on a single word *migration*. The common theme is that "something" moves from one point to another, and this movement is driven by "something". However, as evident from the different contributions of this issue, *migration* is a common word describing many different situations: Molecules, vira, antiquities, humans, and ideas move and, as the impact can be enormous, our quest to understand the causes is equally important.

When molecules migrate from one point to another, they are driven by the quest either to lower their energy or to increase their entropy. The energy-driven migration is similar to bicycling and represents the fact that we prefer to ride our bicycles downhill. The migration driven by entropy is less intuitive and represents the molecular desire for disorder. Entropy, in a simple explanation, represents disorder and as entropy can only increase, the migration driven by entropy is a migration toward a state of larger disorder. I am tempted to replace the negatively biased word *disorder* with the more positively biased

word *diversity*, and then molecular migration can be described as the quest for a larger diversity within the quantum world!

So, no matter if you are considering the migration of stolen antiquities, humans searching for safe havens, or molecules across cellular membranes, we use language and words to communicate our findings. Understanding how words are used across disciplines can thus serve as both an enlightenment and inspiration, and we hope that this second issue of *iPerspectives* will do just that, enlighten and inspire.

In addition to *iPerspectives*, we invite you to follow our activities on Twitter or the AIAS homepage at [www.aias.au.dk](http://www.aias.au.dk).



Photo: Melissa B. Yildirim

Søren Rud Keiding  
AIAS Executive Director, Professor

## EDITORS' NOTE

The earth is constantly transforming, in response to tectonism, wind, movement of water and sub-surface forces. On the surface of the planet, vegetation communities are migrating upwards and northwards due to climate change, and animals follow. Arctic terns migrate from the Arctic to Antarctica, and back, in the longest-known seasonal movement of any animal, thus experiencing more annual daylight in the two summers than any other species. Whales, the long-distance migrants of the seas, migrate between their feeding and breeding grounds. On land, the wildebeest risk their lives to follow the rains, and food, in the spectacular 'great migration'. Human history is also one of migrations, and our future may involve interstellar migration. Ideas spread and travel, resulting in spread of thought, religion, and ideology. And earlier this year, a virus migrated across the globe through human hosts, bringing the world as we knew it to a standstill.

Migration is a transdisciplinary theme. A google search for its definition leads one to choose a zoological, political, or economical explanation for this word. Seasonal movement of an organism from one location to another; or, movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions. Human migration alone can be categorized into four: invasion, conquest, colonization and immigration.

As we got together this Spring to discuss the theme of the current issue of *iPerspectives*, the governments of many countries had initiated lockdowns and traveling freely had suddenly become impossible;

at least for humans. The virus did not observe these restrictions on movement. Many of us, who came to AIAS from abroad, hurriedly traveled back home at the last minute, while travel was still possible. Only time seems to move at this moment.

The current situation prompted us to re-think the meaning and importance of *migration*. What are the causes, reasons and motives for migration? What are the consequences? What are the implications for the plants, animals, and people who migrate? Or for the inanimate objects, ideologies, and technologies; these too move. These questions can be explored and interpreted in multiple ways, depending, for instance, on one's disciplinary background. In this issue of *iPerspectives*, 12 former and current AIAS Fellows shared their views on migration. The resulting issue covers a range of topics from Geology, Ecology and Technology to History, Literature and Politics. This highlights the relevance of the theme of migration and movement to multiple disciplines.

It was a pleasure to bring together this issue of *iPerspectives*, and we would like to thank all the Fellows who contributed their ideas, in a period of great uncertainty and insecurity. Welcome to the multidisciplinary world of AIAS where a word can have vastly different interpretations.

Cici Alexander  
Jennifer Galloway  
Joanna Kalucka  
Kees van Kersbergen

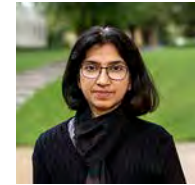


Photo: Anders Trarup

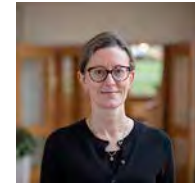


Photo: Søren Kjeldgaard



Photo: Ida Marie Jensen



Photo: Melissa B. Yildirim



# Migration and Geology

*Musings on various time scales*



Photo: Søren Kjeldgaard

By **Jennifer Galloway**

"Night at the Wave" by Max Seigal, Marble Canyon, Arizona © Max Seigal 2018

The topic of migration is truly interdisciplinary: movement of places, of languages, of life, of humans, of culture; both in time and in space. From a long-time geological perspective, migration covers many of the fundamental aspects of geology. Below, three are summarized: plate tectonics, paleobotany, and sedimentology, that vary in their time scales from millions of years to thousands of years to the present-day. Each example offers a perspective on the importance of movement in shaping the past, present, and future Earth.

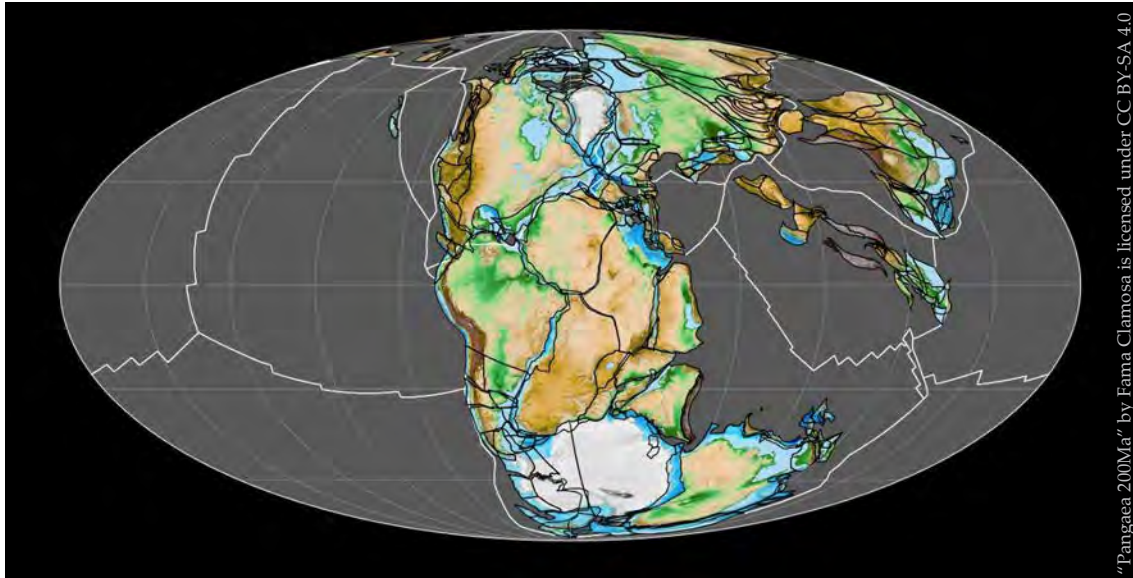
## Migration over millions of years

Continental plates migrate. The establishment of this theory, that states that Earth's solid outer crust, the lithosphere, is separated into plates that move over the molten upper portion of the mantle, the asthenosphere, revolutionized the science of Geology. Tectonic processes began on Earth probably between 3.3 and 3.5 billion years ago. The plate tectonic model builds on the concept of continental drift, an idea developed during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by the meteorologist Alfred

## From a long-time geological perspective, migration covers many of the fundamental aspects of geology

Wegener. The geoscientific community accepted the theory of plate tectonics after seafloor spreading was validated in the late 1950s-early 1960s. The concept of continental drift was based on observations that the outlines of South America's east coast and Africa's west coast seemed to mirror each other, and from matching rock formations and fossils along these edges. Fossil plants, such as *Glossopteris*, and the therapsid (mammal-like) reptile *Lystrosaurus*, were widely distributed across South America, Africa, Antarctica, India, and Australia, suggesting that these now disparate regions were once connected. Indeed, we now know that the continents have repeatedly been connected, and disconnected, over geological time, repeatedly constructing and deconstructing supercontinents. The supercontinent cycle is a quasi-periodic assembly and then dispersion of Earth's continental crust. Throughout the history of

the planet there have putatively been at least 11 supercontinents. These have intriguing names: Vaalbara, Ur, Kenorland, Arctica, Atlantica, Columbia (or Nuna), Rodinia, Pannotia, Gondwana, Laurasia, and the most recent supercontinent, Pangea. The name Pangea is derived from Ancient Greek *pan* (all, entire, whole) and *Gaia* (mother Earth, land) and this supercontinent persisted from the late Paleozoic to the early Mesozoic, approximately 335 million years ago to 175 million years ago. Pangea was centred on the Equator, and was surrounded by the superocean Panthalassa. Pangea is of particular interest to my own research; I study the climate changes associated with its break-up and the migration of its component landmasses. This migration has resulted in the continental configuration of today, and the plates are still moving, at a rate of one to two inches (3-5 cm) per year. Seafloor spreading at mid-



*The supercontinent Pangea in the early Mesozoic 200 million years ago*

ocean ridges and convection currents continue to drive the movement of Earth's tectonic plates atop the fluid molten mantle. Where plates with landmasses collide, the crust crumples and buckles into mountain ranges. India and Asia collided about 55 million years ago, creating the Himalayas. Where a plate of oceanic crust

dives, in a process called subduction, under a landmass, the overlying plate lifts up, also creating mountain ranges. But in this instance, the diving plates melt, offering up freshly molten material to be spewed out in volcanic eruptions such as those that formed some of the mountains in the Andes of South America. At divergent

boundaries, where plates are moving apart, magma from the Earth's mantle rises and creates mountains, volcanoes, or new ocean floor. On land where plates are moving apart, giant troughs are created, such as the Great Rift Valley. As this process continues, eventually, millions of years from now, eastern Africa will split from the continent to form a new landmass, and a mid-ocean ridge will then mark the boundary between the plates. The migration of plates thus continuously shape the

**This migration has resulted in the continental configuration of today**

continental configuration and topography of the planet.

#### Migration over thousands of years

Operating on an entirely different time scale of thousands of years, forests migrate. This too is a topic that geologists are concerned with. The transition from treeline to tundra represents the transition from one biome to another. It also marks a transition of atmospheric change; for example treeline in subarctic Canada approximates the mean summer position of the Arctic Front. The marked change in albedo from boreal to tundra environments provides a powerful positive feedback

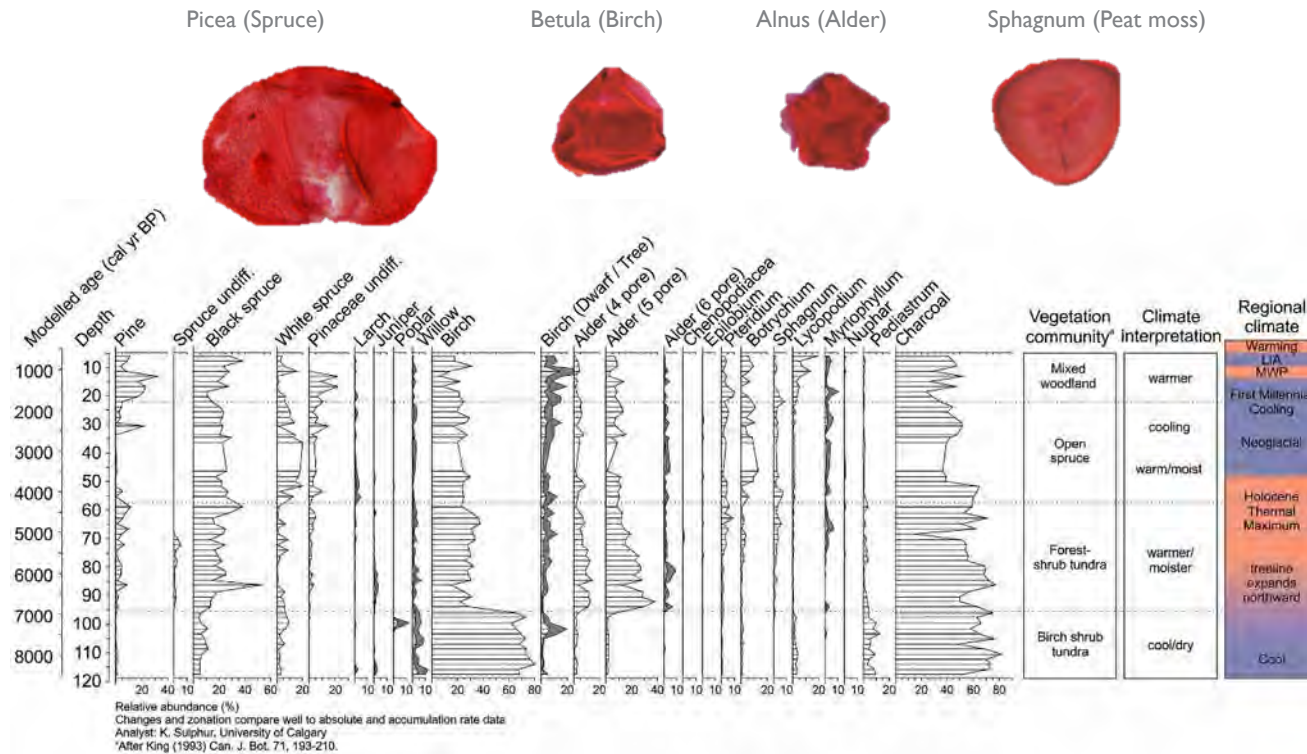
## Operating on an entirely different time scale of thousands of years, forests migrate.

effect to climate. Thus, treeline position, and its movement, is an important consideration in climatology. My former Ph.D student, Kyle Sulphur, and then undergraduate student Shantal Goldsmith, tackled

reconstruction of treeline migration in subarctic and Arctic Canada in a paper published in 2016 in the journal *Global and Planetary Change*. They analyzed sub-fossil pollen preserved in lake sediments that we cored in the Northwest Territories, Canada. With their data we were able to explore how treeline position had changed in response to climate variability over the last 10,000 years during the Holocene Epoch. This relatively cool time in Earth's history is interesting to study; there have been a number of climate perturbations associated with retreat of the glaciers of the last ice age, and establishment of modern climate that includes variability associated with solar cycles and cyclic ocean-atmosphere phenomena. In this paper, we show that treeline expanded in the mid to late Holocene, between about 4050 years ago and 3840 years ago, at a rate of about 50 m/year.

*Field work in -40°C along the Tibbitt to Contwoyto Winter Road in the central Northwest Territories, Arctic Canada. The sediments we retrieved using the triangular freeze corer device (core shown to the left of photo) will contain millions of pollen grains that tell a story of forests and their migration in this cold landscape*





Stratigraphic pollen diagram showing changes in the relative abundance of pollen and spores identified in the Danny's Lake sediment record, Northwest Territories, Canada. Currently, Danny's Lake is located at present day transition from boreal forest to forest tundra. Latin translations for the photomicrographs of the pollen shown (magnification x40): *Picea* – spruce; *Betula* – birch; *Alnus* – alder; *Sphagnum* – peat moss. This analysis shows that early post-glacial climate conditions were cool and dry, supporting birch shrub-tundra (shown by high *Betula* pollen between ca. 8500 and 7000 years ago). At approximately 7000 years before present, black spruce (*Picea mariana*) arrives at Danny's Lake and early successional birch shrub-tundra communities are replaced by spruce-alder

communities. This is the first indication of treeline expansion. White spruce joins the community near 4500 years before present. Its migration from the south is in response to warmer temperatures associated with the Holocene Thermal Maximum, when air temperatures were 1 to 2°C higher in the region than today. The initiation of cool and moist climate conditions associated with the onset of the Neoglacial eventually resulted in treeline retreat to its present day position. Spruce trees live typically about 150-200 years, and thus there is a centennial-scale lag in vegetation response. Birch, Alder, and other shrubs have shorter life spans and community overturn can occur within a century. This diagram and associated interpretations are published in Sulphur et al. (2016).

Photo of the landscape near Danny's Lake at the transition from boreal forest to forest tundra and shrub tundra in the central Northwest Territories of Canada. This locality occurs within a region of discontinuous permafrost.

Treeline migrated at this rate in response to a 1 to 2 °C increase in regional temperature. When the cooler and wetter conditions of the late Holocene Neoglacial arrived around 2300 years ago, treeline retreated, eventually to its current position. The rate of treeline migration of 50 m per year surprised me. I didn't think treeline could move this fast. But our paleolimnological analysis showed that it indeed can. Climate warming is projected to

continue, and to be particularly pronounced in high northern latitudes. This has already resulted in shrubification of tundra areas, and with a long-time geological perspective we know that treeline will migrate steadily north. This will have profound effects on northern environments, ranging from altering permafrost conditions and hydrology, to positive feedback effects that can affect even global climate.



### Present-day migration

Real-time migration of a geological feature can be seen right here in Denmark. The Dune of Råberg Mile is the largest migrating dune in northern Europe. It is located on the west-coast of Jutland between Skagen and Frederikshavn. Here, sand rapidly moves due to harsh winds from the sea. The Råberg Dune is about 1 km wide and 1 km long and is made up of 4 million m<sup>3</sup> of sand grains. The dune is 40 m high. When walking on it, one can imagine oneself in a desert; the shore of vegetated land not in sight. Each year this dune migrates around 15 m towards the northeast, moving closer to the

top of Denmark. Attempts to slow the migratory force of this dune by vegetation have proven unsuccessful; the dune will cover the main road to Skagen in about 100 years or so. Once an area is covered by the dune, it takes about 40 years for the dune to pass over and for the area to re-emerge on the other side. This dune is a geological marvel. It offers us a glimpse into Earth system processes that occurred thousands to millions of years ago that are

preserved in the rock record to be seen today. This principle of uniformitarianism tells us that the same natural laws and processes that occur today operated in the past. Thus, this migrating dune can tell us how the breathtaking subaerial dunes now frozen in time preserved as the Navajo Formation formed. These ancient dunes, exposed for example in Marble Canyon, Arizona, formed approximately 190 million years ago when prevailing

## The Dune of Råberg Mile is the largest migrating dune in northern Europe.

Photo: Jennifer Galloway

*Left: Råberg Mile in northern Denmark. Right: Den Tilsandede Kirke; the buried church, near Skagen, northern Denmark.*

winds changed direction during the Jurassic Period, creating large sand dunes that migrated across a desert. Such ancient and current geological formations provide analogues for interpreting observations on other planets; and thus their importance extends well beyond any particular dune or rock formation on Earth. The study of the genesis of rock formations observable from space, such as dunes, are used to interpret the landscape of other planets, including Venus and Mars. To be able to witness dune formation and migration in action at Råberg Mile offers a “real-time” study of the mechanisms that have shaped our planet, and likely, other planets in our solar system. Thus, the Danish government decided to leave Råberg Mile alone to preserve the area as a monument to show how sand dunes are formed over the centuries.

Migrating dunes are also the reason the church of Saint Lawrence of Rome (aka the sand covered church; Den Tilsandede Kirke), a 14<sup>th</sup> century church

that was the largest in northern Jutland at the time, was almost completely covered by sand by the last half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Today only the tower is still visible above the sands. The National Museum of Denmark owns the site. This is a spectacular site to visit as it is a poignant reminder of the ever on-going migration of sand, and the relentlessness of time.

### References

Sulphur, K., Goldsmith, S.A., Galloway, J.M., Macumber, A., Griffith,

F., Swindles, G.T., Patterson, R.T., Falck, H., Clark, I.D. 2016. Holocene fire regimes and treeline migration rates in sub-Arctic Canada. *Global and Planetary Change* 145, 42-56.

### About the author:

*Jennifer Galloway is a Research Scientist at the Geological Survey of Canada and a former AIAS-COFUND Research Fellow (2019-2020). She is an Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary. Jennifer is a geologist, palynologist, and paleoecologist who is interested in the role of climate on ecosystems.*



Photo: Jennifer Galloway



# AIAS: it's just not quite the same

How is AIAS, as a place of pilgrimage and migration, relevant as an institute of advanced studies?

By **Joshua Nash**

I was invited to give a speech at the farewell reception of Professor Morten Kyndrup, former executive director and founder of AIAS, and now first permanent honorary fellow, and ‘father of AIAS’, on 21 September 2019 honouring his work in establishing the institute. I estimate that there were scholars and attendees from more than 15 nations present. AIAS is a place of pilgrimage and migration.

I ended my address by mentioning of a short skit I did with a Dutch friend for a Norwegian-American friend’s birthday in August 2019. The deal? No gifts, only performances. My Dutch friend and I had been speaking a lot about a concept we were both enamoured by and heard often in Denmark spoken by Danes to non-Danes when the latter try to make sense of the many things quintessentially Danish: “well,

you see, it’s just not quite the same.”

The sketch for the friend went like this. I am Preben, a common name for late middle aged Danish men. I am 55, I drive a truck, and I live in Viborg, a city 65 kilometres from Aarhus. Preben is quite happy to tell people, especially foreigners, in thickly accented Danish English about all the exemplary effects of Denmark. My Dutch mate is

Jaap from the Netherlands, who has been in Denmark for two years.

Preben asks Jaap, “Have you heard of *hygge*?” “Oh, you mean cosiness?” says Jaap. “Ah, it’s just not quite the same.” The conversation continues. “So, Jaap, have you heard of *rugbrød*?” “Oh, you mean rye bread?” “Um, it’s just not quite the same.” Preben prods further. “We have really many special cakes in Denmark. There is one we always eat at birthday parties.” Jaap interjects, “you mean *lagkage*?” “Erm, you know, it’s just not quite the same.” Jaap is getting a little bored, but gets really excited when a key idea is brought up, one which is oh-so Danish: *tryghed*. Jaap is sure he has this one in the bag: “That means reassurance, safety, security, and the ideal that all bad things, matters which are not *hyggelige*, are kept as far away as possible from Danish society.” Once again, Preben offers his appraisal. “Well, sorry, it’s just not quite the same.”

How is this relevant to AIAS as an institute for advanced studies which exists within a larger university structure? During the time I lived in Aarhus, many people I met asked, “So where do you work?” I would tell

**Is it the art on the walls? Is it the time for free thought? Is it the beautiful views?**

them I work at the university. People would inevitably ask, “Whereabouts specifically?” At AIAS in Vennelystparken. “Oh yeah, just behind the dentistry school, right? So is it just like working in other parts of the university?” I eventually come to a plausible answer: “You know, AIAS is just not quite the same.”

Why is it that AIAS is *just not quite the same*? Is it the art on the walls? Is it the free thought, the free time, and the good times availed to those who are selected to exit and even escape at least for some time from the all-so-common drone of day-to-day tenured scholarly life, unbothered by university duties, to broaden perspectives, associate with great minds, and engage in the free-range existence of a

life of letters? Is it the beautiful views to Vennelystparken, a semi wild part of urban Danish nature? It is probably all of these. And none of them. And more. What is sure is that AIAS is a special place because it is different. People come, stay for some time, then leave. It is amorphous in what it began as and into what it is developing. For this, Morten Kyndrup and those who follow are to be congratulated and encouraged. And to the intellectual migrants and academic pilgrims who have come and done their stuff and to those who will come to AIAS and continue the tradition of progress and to the culture of creating a space which is *just not quite the same*—please step lightly to make sure AIAS remains nicely that way.

## About the author:

Joshua Nash is a Research Fellow at the University of New England, Australia, and a former AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2018-2019). He is an islophilic generalist-cum-linguist working on the language of Pitcairn Island. Joshua writes about ethnography, the anthropology of religion, architecture, pilgrimage studies, and philosophical and ontological foundations of language and place. He speaks Danish to his daughter.

# Migration: yet another challenge to the welfare state?

Immigration may, on balance, do good to the economy and the welfare state, but the economy and the welfare state do not yet do good enough to migrants.

By **Kees van Kersbergen**

**T**he welfare state, i.e., the whole set of provisions that nations adopt to protect their populations against social risks, to provide for needs and to redistribute income, faces a number of major challenges. First, demographic ageing, which is the combined effect of increasing life expectancy and a declining fertility rate, obviously puts great financial pressure on pension systems, as the number of pensioners increases,

while the number of contributors to the pension systems decreases. Second, rapid economic and technological changes tend to upset if not disrupt existing labour-market and social-policy arrangements. Robots are taking over jobs, while the rapid development of the platform or ‘gig’ economy revolutionizes what we understand a worker or employee to be. Such developments may undermine the current social-protection and service arrangements, because most social rights are still attached to (soon obsolete?) labour-market status and performance of workers and employees. Third, increasing economic interdependence, internationalization or globalization tend to have a negative impact on the welfare state. To increase international competitiveness, governments may choose to down-size social systems, but if all do so this may lock all welfare states in a potentially disruptive ‘race to the bottom’ that comes at the cost of social protection.

Migration has been argued to pose yet another challenge to the welfare state. But does it? And if so, how? In this short contribution, I look at what migration does do to the economy and the welfare state and, conversely, what the welfare state does to migrants, from the perspective of the welfare states receiving immigrants (hence passing over the important issues of what migration does to the countries of origin).

## Migration: more a blessing than a burden?

One main issue dominating both the academic and the public debate is whether and to what extent immigrants are a blessing or a burden for the economy (labour market) and the welfare state of the destination (receiving) country. Immigrants can be a blessing. That is to say, they may contribute to the economy and the welfare state, for instance by filling job vacancies that



*Flags of Nordic countries*

are otherwise difficult to fill, by creating jobs as self-employed and entrepreneurs, by increasing demand through their consumption, and by adding to the welfare state’s resources via their taxes and contributions. Immigrants can also be a burden. That is to say, they may take the jobs of natives and disproportionately take up health care and social benefits because of unemployment, disability, sickness, early retirement, and non-working family members who need support.

Economic, sociological, historical and consultancy research into these issues concludes that, on balance, migration benefits rather than hurts the economy and the welfare state. In fact, migrants predominantly move from low- to high-productivity countries and in this way boost global economic growth, mostly benefiting the economies of North America and Western Europe. In spite of what many people believe to be true, neither native jobs nor wages are negatively affected by

immigrants; on the contrary, immigrants of all skill levels promote long-term employment growth.

Unemployment, however, tends to hit immigrants harder than native-born workers. Even though overall migrants' labour-market participation has been increasing and unemployment has been declining in recent years (at least until the COVID 19 crisis hit),

## Unemployment tends to hit immigrants harder than native-born workers.

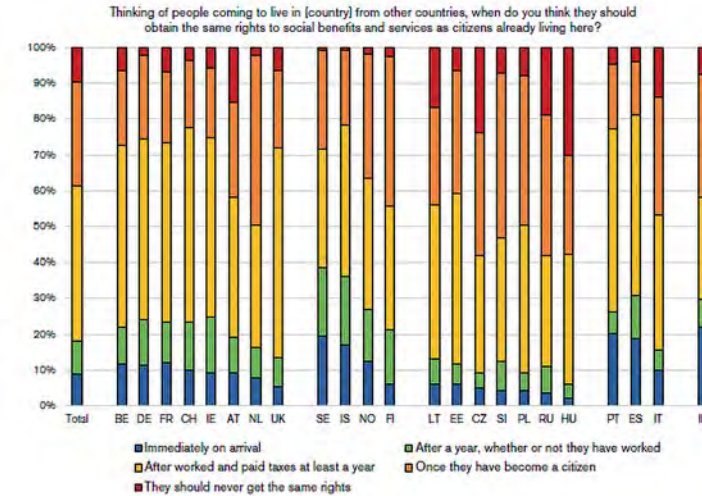
the gap with the native-born is still considerable. Especially among young and low-educated labour immigrants, immigrant women, and refugees in general, employment remains disproportionately low. This even holds for the most extensive and labour-activating universal welfare states in Nordic Europe, including Sweden, where the majority of low-educated, low-skilled refugees find it next to impossible to find a job at all, even after having been in the country for many years.

Troubling is also the observation that among immigrants rising employment is associated with rising in-work poverty. So, even if migrants are successful in finding jobs, their wages are often so low that they cannot escape financial hardship. This brings me to a general (and equally disconcerting) observation, namely that in all welfare states low income, poverty and social exclusion are highest among

### Migration and the politics of the welfare state

There is another downbeat side to the story of how immigrants affect the economy and the welfare state and vice versa and that concerns the politics that surrounds it. No matter what the data show, immigration has become a generally negatively-toned and extremely salient issue in the media, public opinion and party competition in all advanced democratic welfare states. Especially (but not exclusively) right-wing populist parties and politicians try to capitalize on people's fears concerning threats to security (terrorism), loss of national identity, and falling economic well-being assumed to stem from immigration. The more successful these parties and politicians are in their electoral appeal, the more likely centre-right and centre-left parties are to mimic them and shift decisively to an anti-immigration and welfare-chauvinist ('only welfare for the natives') policy positions.

The most recent European Social Survey data, portrayed in figure 1, show that a substantial minority of the European public (on average 40 %, but in some countries



**Figure 1. Preferences regarding the granting of social rights to immigrants, by country and region**

*Thinking of people coming to live in [country] from other countries, when do you think they should obtain the same rights to social benefits and services as citizens already living here?*

[Note: N=42,403; Results are weighted for age, gender and education (pspweight).]

Source: Adopted from Meuleman et al. 2018, p. 8, figure 4, with kind permission from European Social Survey ERIC.

Countries: AT = Austria, BE = Belgium, CZ = Czech Republic, EE = Estonia, FI = Finland, FR = France, DE = Germany, HU = Hungary, IS = Iceland, IE = Ireland, IL = Israel, IT = Italy, LT = Lithuania, NO = Norway, NL = the Netherlands, PL = Poland, PT = Portugal, RU = Russia, SI = Slovenia, ES = Spain, SE = Sweden, CH = Switzerland, UK = United Kingdom

like the Czech Republic almost 60 %) is welfare-chauvinist in that they are unwilling to ever grant migrants from other countries the same rights to social benefits and services as citizens already living in their country, or are only willing to do so when migrants have acquired citizenship (which in most countries is a long and strenuous process). This finding aligns with a well-established brand of research that consistently reports that increasing immigration (heterogeneity; ethnic diversity) lowers social trust and depresses support for the welfare state and income redistribution.

In this sense, immigration is bad news for the welfare state, because it lowers public and political support for generous, universal benefits and services. However, not all sectors and beneficiaries of the welfare state lose support to the same extent. People generally are very consistent in whom they consider to be deserving and worthy of support, namely the old and the sick, and whom they are more sceptical about, namely the unemployed and migrants. As a result, pensions and health care continue to enjoy very high levels of support, while unemployment benefits and social assistance are

## Immigration lowers public and political support for generous, universal benefits and services.

## Immigration is only bad news for the welfare-state provisions for migrants.

much more strongly opposed. It is not hard to understand why unemployment benefits and social assistance for migrants have become the least popular provisions in the welfare state and have been the main target for welfare-state retrenchment. In Denmark, labour-market and social-policy reforms under the influence of the anti-immigration Danish People's Party have been strongly welfare-chauvinist, deliberately sparing native Danes and harming immigrants. In other words, immigration is only bad news for the welfare-state provisions for migrants.

### Conclusion

Although there have been large gains, the labour-market integration of various groups of immigrants, including refugees, remains wanting. And because many social benefits and services are

attached to labour-market performance, immigrants also enjoy less social protection. In addition, immigration has a depressing impact on public and political support for the welfare state, especially when it concerns those benefits that immigrants primarily depend on (unemployment, social assistance). Radical right-wing populist parties, with many mainstream parties following their lead, promote welfare-chauvinist policies that protect the natives and hurt immigrants.

Socio-economically speaking then, immigration may, on balance, do good to the economy and the welfare state, but because of the too low labour-market participation and high (in-work) poverty among immigrants the economy and the welfare state do not yet do good enough to migrants. In addition, welfare rights of immigrants are politically under attack, so the welfare state is unlikely to do much better for them in the near future.

### Sources:

Eurostat (2020), Migrant Integration Statistics - At Risk of Poverty and Social Exclusion, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant\\_integration\\_statistics\\_-\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_poverty\\_and\\_social\\_exclusion](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant_integration_statistics_-_at_risk_of_poverty_and_social_exclusion) (accessed 11 June 2020).

OECD (2019), International Migration Outlook 2019, Paris: OECD.

### Further reading:

Goldin, Ian, Cameron, Geoffrey and Balarajan, Meera (2012), *Exceptional People. How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Future*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.



### About the author:

*Kees van Kersbergen studied Political Science at the University Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and holds a PhD from the European University Institute, Florence, Italy. He is a Jens Christian Skou Fellow at ALIAS (2020-2012) and Professor of Comparative Politics at the Department of Political Science of Aarhus University (since 2010). His research activities cover a wide range of topics and issues in comparative politics and political economy.*

# Infectious Talk, Communicable Disease

What *communicare* offers that *migrare* does not is a powerful reminder that we are not just beings on the move

By **Samuel McCormick**

When we hear the word “migration,” we usually think like ancient Romans, recalling its ancestral Latin verb *migrare*, meaning “to move from one place to another.” In particular, we envision large groups of living beings, humans and nonhuman alike, moving from one residence, locality, or habitat to another. All too often, however, we forget that living beings of every stripe, whether in transit or not, are also some of the residences, localities, and habitats between which other organisms migrate.

Infectious diseases are among these migrant organisms, but

To make something common in spoken discourse is not just to share it with others, but also to afford them the very same privilege, effectively inviting others to “spread the word” about what they’ve just heard. And when listeners-turned-speakers spread the word about something they’ve just heard, they make it *familiar*, often to the point of allowing to appear *ordinary* and, to this extent, *inferior*, *vulgar*, *profane*, and even *polluted*. Make no mistake: to communicate is always, in some sense, to contaminate.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, the epidemiological pairing of “communicable” with “disease.” For what *communicare*

Whatever else “migration” means for our species today, it has as much to do with humans being on the move from one place to another as it does with humans being moved by organisms other than themselves—organisms which nevertheless, and much to our frustration, sometimes even to the point of death, often move us just as we move each other, adding biological support to the sociological fact that “influence” is less something we actively do to others than something we passively undergo ourselves.<sup>2</sup> If diseases can spread like words, and often by the very same means, it’s not because we are

powerful transmitters of both but, instead, because we are among their most vulnerable receptors.

So it should come as no surprise to hear that, long before epidemiologists began pairing “communicable” with “disease,” thereby likening infectious disease to everyday talk, philosophers of communication were describing (and often deriding) everyday talk in terms of infectious disease. In the following excerpt from my recent book, *The Chattering Mind: A Conceptual History of Everyday Talk* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), I spotlight

## Long before epidemiologists began pairing “communicable” with “disease,” philosophers were studying everyday talk in terms of infectious disease.

several through lines in this enduring scholarly tradition, showing that the secret conceptual affinity between everyday talk and infectious disease is much older, and quite a bit more expansive, than modern epidemiological usage suggests.

### Notes:

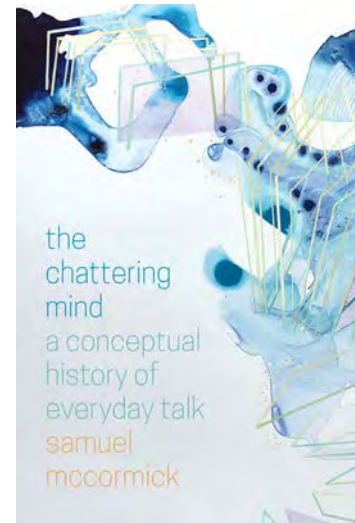
<sup>1</sup> See John Durham Peters, “Communication, History of the Idea,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 689–93.

<sup>2</sup> See Daniel M. Gross, *Being-Moved: Rhetoric as the Art of Listening* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020).

## To communicate is always, in some sense, to contaminate

they are rarely labelled as such. Instead, epidemiologists, in a fitting tribute to the Greek *epidemia*, meaning “among or upon the common people,” frequently describe these diseases as *communicable*, from the Latin *communicare*, meaning “to share” and, more precisely, “to make common.” How are we to understand this curious choice of terms and the lexical history it evokes?

offers that *migrare* does not is a powerful reminder that we are not just beings on the move, with communities in every nook and cranny on the planet, but also some of the earthly cracks and crevices in which other migrant organisms come to reside—and often by way of the same communicative practice which allows us to sustain these communities, namely, *everyday talk*.



### Communicable Disease

Kierkegaard rarely used German terms in place of *snak*. When he did, however, it was *Geschwätz*, meaning “babble,” that appealed to him. This may be why Theodor Haecker, in his decisive 1914 edition of Kierkegaard’s “Critique of the Present Age,” translated *snak* as *Geschwätz*, encouraging generations of German intellectuals to misunderstand Kierkegaard’s radical philosophical notion of chatter as a conservative social critique of babble. Kierkegaard did not pull *Geschwätz* from thin air, of course. He encountered it in a variety of German texts, ranging from philosophical works to religious sermons to children’s stories. But his primary sources seem to have been German translations of a single Greek text: Plutarch’s essay “Concerning Talkativeness.” In place of *adoleschia*—the Greek word for “aimless speech” on which Plutarch and many of his predecessors relied—Kierkegaard’s German translations read *Geschwätz*.

Excerpts reprinted with permission from *The Chattering Mind: A Conceptual History of Everyday Talk* by Samuel McCormick, published by The University of Chicago Press. © 2020 by The University of Chicago Press. All rights reserved.

Kierkegaard rarely used German terms in place of *snak*. When he did, however, it was *Geschwätz*, meaning “babble,” that appealed to him.

This may be why the young Heidegger, after studying Haecker’s translation of Kierkegaard’s “Critique of the Present Age,” not only integrated *Geschwätz* into his emerging philosophy of communication but also, as we shall see in chapter 5, traced the meaning of this term to Greek discussions of *adoleschia*. That Lacan would eventually follow suit, likening the free associations of his patients to the *adoleschia* of ancient Greeks, makes this triangulation of *snak*, *Geschwätz*, and *adoleschia* in Kierkegaard’s work an especially curious turning point in the conceptual history of everyday talk—and one we cannot ignore. In order to account for this triangulation of Greek, German, and Danish terms, we must follow Kierkegaard’s lead, if only for a moment, returning to Greek discussions of *adoleschia*.

The ancient world was lousy with *adoleschia*, and Plutarch was not the first to notice. Aristophanes and Xenophon attributed this aimless way of speaking to philosophers like Socrates; Isocrates and Plato tried to pin it on the sophists; and Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Plutarch’s contemporary, Dio Chrysostom, noted its occurrence throughout the citizenry.<sup>3</sup> Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to address each of these nuanced accounts, it is important for us to explore those which directly influenced Kierkegaard’s theory of chatter. Foremost among these influential texts was Plutarch’s essay “On Talkativeness” and Aristophanes’ well-known comedy *Clouds*.

Given his keen interest in the *Snakke-Syge* of Gert Westphaler, Kierkegaard must have been intrigued by Plutarch’s characterization of *adoleschia* as a disease. “It is a troublesome and difficult task that philosophy has in hand when it undertakes to cure garrulousness [*adoleschian*],” his essay on talkativeness begins. “For the remedy, words of reason, requires listeners; but the garrulous [*adoleschoi*] listen to nobody, for they are always talking. And this is the first symptom of their ailment: looseness of the tongue becomes impotence of the ears.”<sup>4</sup>

Barbers are especially vulnerable to this disease, Plutarch continues, “for the greatest chatterboxes [*adoleschotatoi*] stream in and sit in their chairs, so that they are themselves infected with the habit.” To illustrate this occupational hazard, he recalls two talkative barbers, both of whom seem to have caught Kierkegaard’s attention. The first is designed to amuse: “It was a witty answer, for instance, that King Archelaüs gave to a loquacious [*adoleschou*] barber, who, as he wrapped his towel around him asked, ‘How shall I cut your hair, Sire?’ ‘In silence,’ said Archelaüs” (T, 509A). The close connection between *snak* and *Geschwätz* is readily apparent in Kierkegaard’s reading of this passage. In one journal entry, he aptly describes the theme of Plutarch’s

essay as “*Snaksomhed*.” In the next, he quotes from the German translation of this particular anecdote, where “loquacious barber” appears as “*geschwätzigen Barbier*.”<sup>5</sup>

More suggestive still is the second talkative barber described in Plutarch’s essay:

It was a barber also who first announced the great disaster of the Athenians in Sicily, having learned it in the Peiraeus from a slave, one of those who had escaped from the island. Then the barber left his shop and hurried at full speed to the city,

Lest another might win the glory  
of imparting the news to the city,  
and he come second.

A panic naturally arose and the people gathered in assembly and tried to come at the origin of the rumor. So the barber was brought forward and questioned; yet he did not even know the name of his informant, but referred the origin to a nameless and unknown person. The assembly was enraged and cried out, “Torture the cursed fellow! Put him on the rack! He has fabricated and concocted this tale! Who else heard it? Who believed it?” The wheel was brought and the man was stretched upon it. Meanwhile there arrived bearers of the disastrous news, men who had escaped from the slaughter itself. All, therefore, dispersed, each to his private mourning, leaving the wretched fellow bound on the wheel. But when he was set free late in the day when it was already nearly evening, he asked the executioner if they had also heard “how the general, Nicias, had died.” Such an unconquerable and incorrigible evil does habit make garrulity [*adoleschian*]. (T, 509A–C)

Note the similarities between this garrulous barber and Gert Westphaler. Much as Master Gert suffers from a “chatter disease” characterized by an obsessive urge to inform and narcissistic delusions of grandeur, Plutarch’s barber is unable to control, much less to curb, his glory-seeking impulse to report what he has heard—even after being tortured for it.

Also worth noting here are the connections Plutarch suggests between rumor-spreading, news-reporting, and talkative barbers. Kierkegaard makes a similar observation in his unfinished *Book on Adler*, to be discussed in chapter 3, almost certainly in reference to this ancient anecdote: “The person who does not have the opportunity of keeping up with the times by means of newspapers can very well be satisfied with the barber, who formerly, when people as yet did not have newspapers, was also what newspapers are now.”<sup>6</sup> This is neither a compliment to barbers nor a celebration of newspapers. As Kierkegaard goes on to explain in his literary review of *Two Ages*, about which more in

In place of *adoleschia*—the Greek word for “aimless speech” on which Plutarch and many of his predecessors relied—Kierkegaard’s German translations of this essay read *Geschwätz*.

# The triangulation of *snak*, *Geschwätz*, and *adoleschia* in Kierkegaard's work was an especially curious turning point in the conceptual history of everyday talk.

the following chapter, much of what passes for news in the modern era began as an offhand comment overheard by a “loquacious [*snaksom*] barber” (TA, 23). Again, it is difficult to ignore the parallels between the loquacious barber in Plutarch’s anecdote, who incited panicked rumors about the great disaster of the Athenians, and the garrulous barber in Holberg’s play, whose extensive claims against spreading rumors are, in fact, the primary subject of “town gossip” (*Folkes Snak*) (MGW, 35). Both fail to realize that the chatter disease from which they suffer is also, in effect, a communicable disease they spread to others.

Between the ancient barber and the modern journalist is the literary reviewer. “He rushes more swiftly through the streets than that barber who gave his life in order to be the first to bring the news of the victory at Marathon,” Kierkegaard quips, inadvertently conflating Plutarch’s anecdote with the legend of the runner from Marathon, who died after delivering news of victory to Athens. “His shout causes more sensation than when the one who first catches a glint out at sea shouts loudly throughout the whole fishing village: Herring!” (P, 15). In other words, Kierkegaard continues,

The book has come out. The reading public is gathered in the synagogue for mutual entertainment. “Have you read the book?” No, not yet, but I have heard that it is not great. “Have you read the book?” No, but I paged through it a little at Reitzel’s book shop; if only I knew who the author is. “Have you read the book?” No, but I am eager to see it and already have promises in three places for the loan of it. There are variations on these and similar themes while the hubbub and noise increase, because empty barrels make the greatest sound and the synagogue, like the church bell, has—a tongue and an empty head. (P, 16)

Strewn throughout this cacophonous crowd are observant literary reviewers: “By their watchful gaze, their restless glances, their outstretched necks, their perked up ears, one easily identifies them.” And the tasks of each are always the same: to listen carefully to “the public’s gossip [*Bysnak*]” and, wherever possible, to amplify it in “chatter [*Snak*]” of their own. “When he has heard what he wants, he then rushes home and while the empty gossip [*den tomme Passiar*] is still rattling in his head, he writes a review,” thereby occasioning more empty gossip and, in turn, more tawdry reviews. In this sense, the literary reviewer is not “a police inspector in the service of good taste” but, instead, “the acting water inspector who takes care that the wastewater flows freely and without obstruction. Everything is thereby completed in itself; the water comes from the public and flows back into the public.” And so

the cycle continues: “If only the chatter [*Snakken*] can be set in motion, then all is well” (P, 16–19; trans. modified; cf. BOA, 264).

How are we to understand this shift in imagery from reverberant containers of various sorts—empty heads, noisy barrels, church bells, bustling synagogues—to circular flows of wastewater? Again, Kierkegaard seems to have Plutarch in mind. If the first two symptoms of *adoleschia* are “looseness of the tongue” and “impotence of the ears,” the pseudo-medical terms that Plutarch invents to describe these symptoms—*asigesia* and *anekoia*—point readers in a gastrological direction, encouraging them to understand the inability to remain silent as “diarrhea of the tongue” and the inability to listen as “constipation of the ears” (T, 512C, note a). A few sentences later, Plutarch confirms this crude account, effectively setting the stage for Kierkegaard’s critique of literary reviewers: “While others retain what is said, in talkative persons [*adoleschon*] it goes right through in a flux [*diarreousin*]; they go about like empty vessels, void of sense, but full of noise” (T, 502D–E).

But there is more at stake in Plutarch’s pseudo-medical discourse than a vulgar adaption of the ancient proverb about empty vessels making the loudest noise. Although *asigesia* and *anekoia* were coined by Plutarch and remain difficult to translate, *diarreousin* descends from the Greek verb *diarrhein*, which carries several clear meanings. When applied to vessels like barrels, *diarrhein* means “to flow through.” When used in connection to news reports, it means “to spread about.” And when considered epidemiologically, it refers to “the wasting away of a diseased body.” Together, these definitions suggest that, as the *snak* of barbers, reviewers, and other *adoleschon* flows through the *Bysnak* of their neighbors, readerships, and other audiences—and vice versa—the communicable disease from which they all suffer gradually spreads throughout the populace, and always to its detriment. To engage in chatter is, for Plutarch and Kierkegaard alike, to emit a collective *rheuma*—the sickening communicative discharge of an already suffering civic body.

## About the author:



Samuel McCormick is Professor of Communication Studies at San Francisco State University and was EURIAS & Marie-Curie Research Fellow at AIAS in 2017–2018. His latest book, *The Chattering Mind: A Conceptual History of Everyday Talk*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in February 2020.

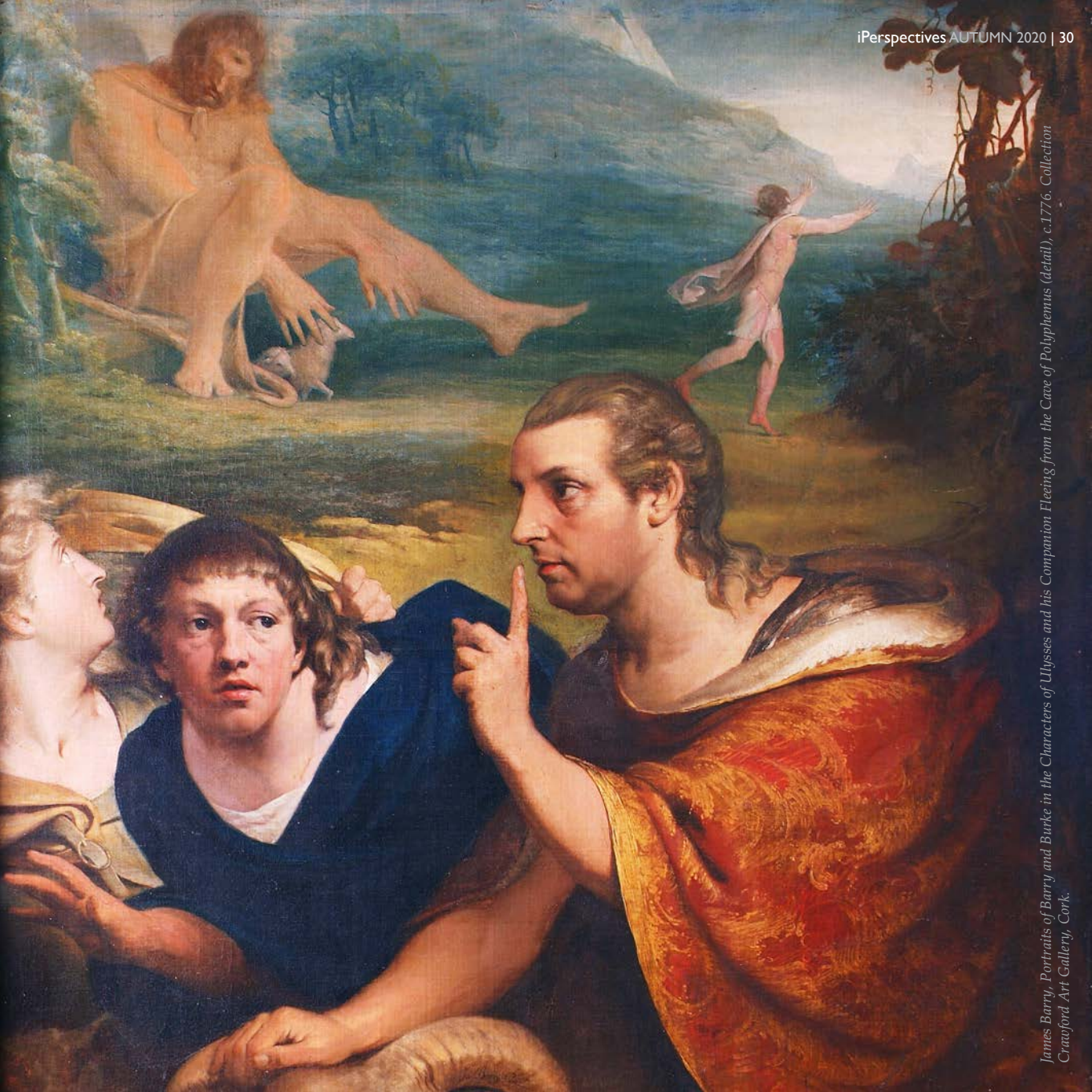
## Notes:

3 See, for instance, Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 1476–1492; Xenophon, *Economics*, 11.3; Isocrates, *Against the Sophists*, 13.8; Plato, *Statesman*, 299b; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 117b; Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1390a; Theophrastus, *Characters*, 3; Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses*, 20.3.

4 Plutarch, “On Talkativeness,” in *Moralia*, Vol. VI, trans. W. C. Helmbold (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 2000), 502B. Hereafter abbreviated T.

5 Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks*, Volume 4, eds. Niels Jørgen Cappelørn et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 380. Hereafter abbreviated JNB 4.

6 Søren Kierkegaard, *The Book on Adler*, eds. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 7. Hereafter abbreviated BOA.



James Barry, Portraits of Barry and Burke in the Characters of Ulysses and his Companion Fleeing from the Cave of Polyphemus (detail), c.1776. Collection Crawford Art Gallery, Cork.

# Classical Literature & Irish Migration History

Throughout Ireland's history, the languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome have provided a vehicle for the articulation of the varied Irish experiences of migration.

By **Isabelle Torrance**

**W**hat has literature from ancient Greece and Rome to do with Irish migration history? This is one of the research questions that we seek to answer in our project 'Classical Influences and Irish Culture' (CLIC) funded by the European Research Council and hosted at the Centre for Irish Studies, Aarhus University.

### Early History

Throughout Irish history, experiences of migration, travel and exile, whether effected by necessity or by choice, are commonplace. As far back as the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE, Ireland produced influential wandering scholars, *peregrini* (or 'exiles'), such as Columba and Columbanus, who led important missionary work and founded major monasteries throughout Europe. Expertise in the Latin language was a significant aspect of monastic training and dissemination of Christian values. However, manuscripts preserved in monasteries such as Bobbio in Italy, founded by Columbanus, show that training in the complexities of Latin grammar relied on paradigms taken from the pagan literature of ancient Rome, which were given as illustrative examples in classical grammatical treatises. New commentaries on ancient *grammatica* were produced, such as the *Ars Ambrosiana*

which is generally dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE. It is not clear precisely who composed this important commentary, but recent research has uncovered evidence of specifically Irish influence in the construction of etymologies for Latin words through allusion to the Irish (or Gaelic) language.

Wandering scholars continued to be common in medieval Ireland, and the 'wandering hero' motif was a staple of the Old Irish *immrama* 'voyage tales'. The 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century tale *Merugud Uilix Maicc Leirtis* 'Wandering of Ulysses son of Laertes' is a remarkable blend of the traditional Irish *immram* and the story of Homer's *Odyssey*, which recounts the numerous and often fantastical adventures of the Greek hero Odysseus on his long journey home after the Trojan War. Significantly, the Odysseus figure in the Irish tale is a polyglot, unlike the Greek original, and this multilingual aspect of the Irish hero reflects

contemporary cosmopolitanism among the Irish who were well-versed in Latin, the *lingua franca* of the Middle Ages, as well as their native Irish (Gaelic). Some exceptional Irish scholars were also experts in classical Greek, most famously the 9<sup>th</sup> century Neoplatonist philosopher Eriugena who was recruited to France by the Carolingian King Charles the Bald.

**Colonization by Britain:** *From the 'Flight of the Earls' to Hedge Schools*

The campaign of plantations by the English crown across Ireland in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries involved largescale land confiscations from local Catholic Gaelic chieftains, and the redistribution of this land to largely Protestant settlers from Britain. A significant moment in this history was the 'Flight of the Earls' in 1607 when the leading families of Ireland's northern province of Ulster went into permanent exile destined for Spain. As a Protestant minority took control of Ireland's land and governing institutions, Irish Catholic exiles together with the Catholic majority at home continued to identify strongly with their connections to Rome, to the Latin language, and to Latin literature. As they

## Classical literature from Greece and Rome was often a significant part of the curriculum in the Irish 'hedge schools'.

continued to produce their own literature in Latin, Irish scholars (many of whom were exiles) sought to promote an alternative to the English colonial narrative.

Along with colonization came a series of 'Penal Laws' designed to oppress Catholics and Protestant dissenters while supporting the ruling Protestant Ascendancy loyal to the British crown. These laws came to include a prohibition on education for members of 'non-conforming' faiths, which led to the creation of illegal 'hedge schools' throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, in particular, where Catholics and Presbyterians could be secretly educated. Classical literature from Greece and Rome was often a significant part of the curriculum in the Irish hedge schools, where Greek and Latin were taught through the Irish language thus entirely circumventing English. In the famous 1980 play *Translations* by Brian Friel, this scenario

of learning classical literature through Irish in a hedge school is enacted against the backdrop of a fictional 1833 ordinance survey exercise by British civil servants who create bizarre-sounding anglicized versions of meaningful Irish-language place names in rural Donegal. The kind of students depicted in Friel's play would have been among the estimated 8.5 million Irish who emigrated in the 1840s, often to escape starvation resulting from The Great Famine of that decade.

**Colonialism and the Paradox of Exile at Home:** *Ogygia, Ulysses, and Northern Irish Politics*

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the cultural antiquity of Ireland was sometimes asserted through identification of Ireland as 'Ogygia', the mystical island of the nymph Calypso in Homer's *Odyssey* which offers immortality but where Odysseus is trapped in distressed exile. This

identification was derived from the claim, made by the ancient author Plutarch in his treatise *The Face on the Moon*, that Ogygia was located to the west of Britain. If Ogygia represents Ireland, then the location of Odysseus' extended exile becomes 'home' in an Irish context. The fascination with tracing Homeric geography, which persisted into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was part of what inspired James Joyce's concretization of wandering in his *Ulysses*. Radically, Joyce transposed the original exile experiences of Odysseus (Ulysses) from the outer legendary world to specific locations of contemporary 1920s Dublin. Joyce thus continues the motif of locating exile at home, while he was writing from a position of self-imposed exile in Europe.

The experience of being an 'exile' at 'home' in Ireland is a product of colonial subjectivity and of conflicting concepts of national identity. Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney identified with the Roman poet Ovid, who was banished from Rome to the Black Sea for obscure political reasons at the peak of his career and died in exile ten years later. In Heaney's 1975 poem 'Exposure' from

***Merugud Uilix Maicc Leirtis* is a remarkable blend of the traditional Irish *immram* and the story of Homer's *Odyssey*.**

the collection *North*, Heaney considers his own migration from the violent civil war in Northern Ireland, a province of the United Kingdom, to his new home in the Irish Republic. He is like Ovid writing exile poetry but as a paradoxical 'inner emigré'.

### The Diaspora and Romanticization of Home

From most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as for the 19<sup>th</sup>, Ireland continued to have the highest emigration rates in Europe. The current diaspora of Irish descent is often estimated at 70 million. Research on the Irish diaspora experience shows that it includes notions of an original forced exile (even if this was not the case) and a dream of return

**Members of a diaspora community can often develop outdated or unrealistic notions of the 'homeland'.**

to the homeland. Members of a diaspora community can often develop outdated or unrealistic notions of the 'homeland', as is forcefully exposed in the *Odyssey*-inspired poems from Northern Irish poet Michael Longley's 1991 *Gorse Fires* collection. Odysseus' return is magical in 'Homecoming', but he finds deep depression in 'Laertes'. His mother is a zombie in 'Anticleia', and his dead dog is associated with other suffering creatures at home in 'Argos'. In 'The Butchers', Odysseus and his son Telemachus are murderers while the god Hermes is a clergyman rounding up dead souls. Longley captures romanticized notions of homecoming in exiles, and how these can be shattered on an actual return, by linking destructive political violence in Northern Ireland to Odysseus' slaughter of the suitors and maids in the palace on his return to Ithaca.

Throughout Ireland's history, then, the languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome have provided a vehicle for the articulation of the varied Irish experiences of migration, from the *peregrini* of early Irish Christianity to those fleeing conflict in contemporary Northern Ireland.



Photo: Lars Kruse

### About the author:

Isabelle Torrance is Professor of Classical Reception at Aarhus University, Department of English, and Principal Investigator for the ERC-funded project 'Classical Influences and Irish Culture' (CLIC) (2019-2024). She earned her PhD in Classics from Trinity College Dublin in 2004 and is a former AIAS Fellow (2016-2019). Publications include seven books, most recently *Classics and Irish Politics 1916-2016* (Oxford University Press, 2020). See further <https://clic.au.dk/>

# Forced Migration

*A brief account of an antiquity looted from Greece*



By **Christos Tsirogiannis**

Home	Introduction	Catalogs	Views of the Gallery	Contact
Recent Acquisitions	Featured Masterworks of Ancient Art	Video & Slide Show Gallery		
Greek	Etruscan	Roman	Coptic	Early Christian/Byzantine
Sardinian & Iberian	Egyptian	New Eastern	Protestant	Cypriot
Helms & Weapons	Gold & Silver	Ancient Glass	Objects up to \$2,500	Ancient Coins



ROMAN LARGE MARBLE RELIEF SECTION DEPICTING A BATTLE BETWEEN GREEKS AND TROJANS

Most antiquities that have been looted or stolen are forced to migrate, i.e. they are smuggled out of the countries of origin and 'laundered' to acquire a legal profile wherever they subsequently travel, in order to produce profit for the individuals, companies and institutions involved in the trafficking chain. For every antiquity eventually repatriated, several thousand will never return to their homeland; the reason for that, apart from the lack of adequate evidence, is also the incapability or/and the unwillingness of the authorities to work efficiently on researching and fighting this crime on a long-term basis.

In my free time, I am searching the websites of museums, auction houses and dealers' galleries, to identify illicit antiquities and start claim and repatriation cases for various countries. So, in the evening of January 7, 2017, while I was looking at the website of the 'Royal-Athena Galleries' in New York, I saw a large marble Roman relief belonging to a sarcophagus, 'depicting a battle between Greeks and Trojans' (according to the gallery's website, see Fig. 1). The antiquity was marked as 'P.O.R.', meaning 'Price on Request', which is the market's way to state that an object is expensive; it was later confirmed as on offer for \$500,000. However, I found the same relief (Fig. 2) depicted in four Polaroid images included in the photographic and documentary archive confiscated from the convicted Italian antiquities dealer Gianfranco Becchina. Since the early 2000s, due to my working with the Italian and Greek judicial and police authorities in discovering and

Figs. 1-2: Top: the sarcophagus relief on the website of the 'Royal-Athena Galleries' in New York, in early January 2017 (© USA Greek Reporter); Bottom: the same relief depicted in a Polaroid image from the confiscated Becchina archive; the note 'PF 21' at the lower right corner stands for 'Port Franc, object no. 21' (the Basel Free Port, location of one of Becchina's warehouses).



ZENE: 29.10.88				
Date	Lecture	Debit	Credit	Balance
29.10.88	Spore Giorgio	Fr. 35'000		Fr. 35'000
	"	Fr. 50'000		Fr. 50'000
29.10.88	Spore G.H.	Fr. 15'000		Fr. 50'000
	"		Fr. 50'000	Fr. 50'000
29.10.88	Trapani	Fr. 16'000		Fr. 66'000
	Dogana multa			Fr. 50'000
		Fr. 20'300		Fr. 86'300
	Michel Canina	Fr. 15'000		Fr. 50'000
				Fr. 15'000
	Total		Fr. 10'300	Fr. 50'000

DATE	MONTE	CHARGE	DEBIT	CREDIT	Saldo
1. Nov. 88	1	Testa Femora	Fr. 2'000		
2. 20.12.88	1	Varro	Fr. 90'000		
3. 1. 89	1	Rivista mond.		Fr. 30'000	
4. 5. 89	1	Diario. br.	Fr. 30'000		
5. 22. 89	1	Braccia			
6. 22. 89	1	Risult. (S) (S) (S)		Fr. 20'000	
7. 1. 89	1	Stat. alaf. sed.		Fr. 30'000	
8. 12. 89	1	Rivista		Fr. 20'000	
9. 15. 89	1	Tito. scarp.		Fr. 6'000	
10. 16. 89	1	Torretto. frons		Fr. 40'000	
				Fr. 4'000	
				Fr. 112'000	

pursuing cases of illicit antiquities, I have had official access to several digitized confiscated archives depicting illicit antiquities, including that of Becchina.

'Royal-Athena Galleries' have been involved in the sale of several looted and stolen antiquities, before and after this identification. The relief's provenance given by the gallery was:

'Ex Swiss art market, April 1991; Dr. H collection, Germany, acquired from Royal-Athena in April 2000'.

Not surprisingly, Becchina was not mentioned in the provenance. The evidence I sent the next day to INTERPOL, the Greek police art squad and to the District Attorney's Office in New York included the invoice with which the owner of 'Royal-Athena Galleries', Dr. Jerome Eisenberg, bought the relief directly from Becchina's gallery 'Antike Kunst Palladion' in Basel, on April 15, 1991 for \$95,000 (Fig. 3). In it, no provenance was given regarding the relief. Becchina's name was printed at the top of the invoice, immediately below the name of his gallery. That document proved that Eisenberg knew that Becchina was the owner of the relief, but he deliberately 'disguised' him in the 2017 provenance as: 'Ex Swiss art market, April 1991'. From an abbreviation in a handwritten document, I uncovered too the fact that Georgios Zenebisis, a Greek middleman who has been involved in the sale of other antiquities looted from Greece, was the one who in 1988 sold the relief to Becchina, sending it from Greece to Basel, Switzerland (Fig. 4). Based on the identification, the supporting

Figs. 3-4: Top: the invoice from Becchina to Eisenberg for the sale of the sarcophagus relief. Bottom: Becchina's handwritten account of antiquities received from Zenebisis. The sarcophagus relief appears to have been bought on May 25, 1988 for 60,000 Swiss Francs.



Fig. 5: New York District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. delivering the relief to the Consul General of Greece in New York (Ellines.com)

Fig. 6: The front page of the exhibition leaflet for the event at the University of Heidelberg.

evidence and the true, reconstructed provenance that I sent to the relevant authorities, the American judicial and police authorities seized the relief by January 13, 2017, six days after my identification.

On February 10, 2017 the relief was handed to the Greek authorities, during a ceremony that took place at the District Attorney's Office in New York (Fig. 5). The Greek authorities never made any reference to my work, whereas the District Attorney's Office in New York explicitly stated on its website that 'The recovery was made possible by the efforts of Dr. Christos Tsirogiannis'. It was disappointing for a Greek migrant like me and an archaeologist to see my voluntary work acknowledged by a foreign country, but not by my own country, especially on a matter of national importance regarding the repatriation of a Greek illicit antiquity.

In November 2019 members of the Committee - now 'Community' - on the Illicit Trade in Cultural

**On February 10, 2017  
the relief was handed to  
the Greek authorities**

Material, which is part of the European Association of Archaeologists, notified me that a temporary exhibition called 'Stolen Past - Lost Future' was travelling to various museums and universities in Germany and Switzerland, in cooperation with the Greek Ministry of Culture. Heidelberg University, Baden State Museum, Fürstenberghaus, University of Münster and University of Basel hosted the exhibition, which was also due to visit New Town Hall in Hanover in 2020. In these exhibitions were presented the stories of at least two antiquities<sup>1</sup> that I have identified and worked on, but without making any mention of my work. The story of the sarcophagus relief was the piece with which all the exhibitions were advertised, both in their websites (e.g. Badisches Landes Museum) and on the front page of the exhibition's leaflets (e.g. University of Münster and University of Heidelberg, see Fig. 6).

The brief presentation of this case is an example of how illicit antiquities, after suffering from looting and smuggling, with their ancient history being erased, are now suffering a second erasure regarding the way they were rediscovered, claimed and repatriated. The sarcophagus relief was forced to 'emigrate' from Greece to Switzerland and the USA. Now, after its repatriation, it is its story, as told in various exhibitions, which is 'migrating',



but in a deliberately incomplete way, misleading the European citizens. Unfortunately, this story is told by professionals, whose responsibility is actually exactly the opposite. While, in public presentations of stories of immigrants, the details are usually meticulously reconstructed, in the case of illicit antiquities their reconstructed stories are usually misrepresented to serve specific political and other agendas.

*This article is dedicated to the memory of Dr Paolo Giorgio Ferri, Italian public prosecutor, true fighter of the illicit antiquities trafficking, and a great friend, who passed away in Rome, on June 14, 2020.*

Note:

<sup>1</sup> The exhibitions presented - in panels with text and images - the stories only, not the objects themselves. There were also the stories of at least two more antiquities to the repatriation of which I contributed as a member of the Greek Task Force team, between 2006 and 2008.



Photo: Ida Marie Jensen

#### About the author:

Christos Tsirogiannis is an AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2019-2022). He is a forensic archaeologist researching international illicit antiquities trafficking networks through the identification of illicit antiquities in auction houses, dealers' galleries, museums and private collections.

# Tundra in *transition*

The choreography of the tundra is rapidly changing, it moves in ways that it did not in the past

By **Jeffrey Kerby**

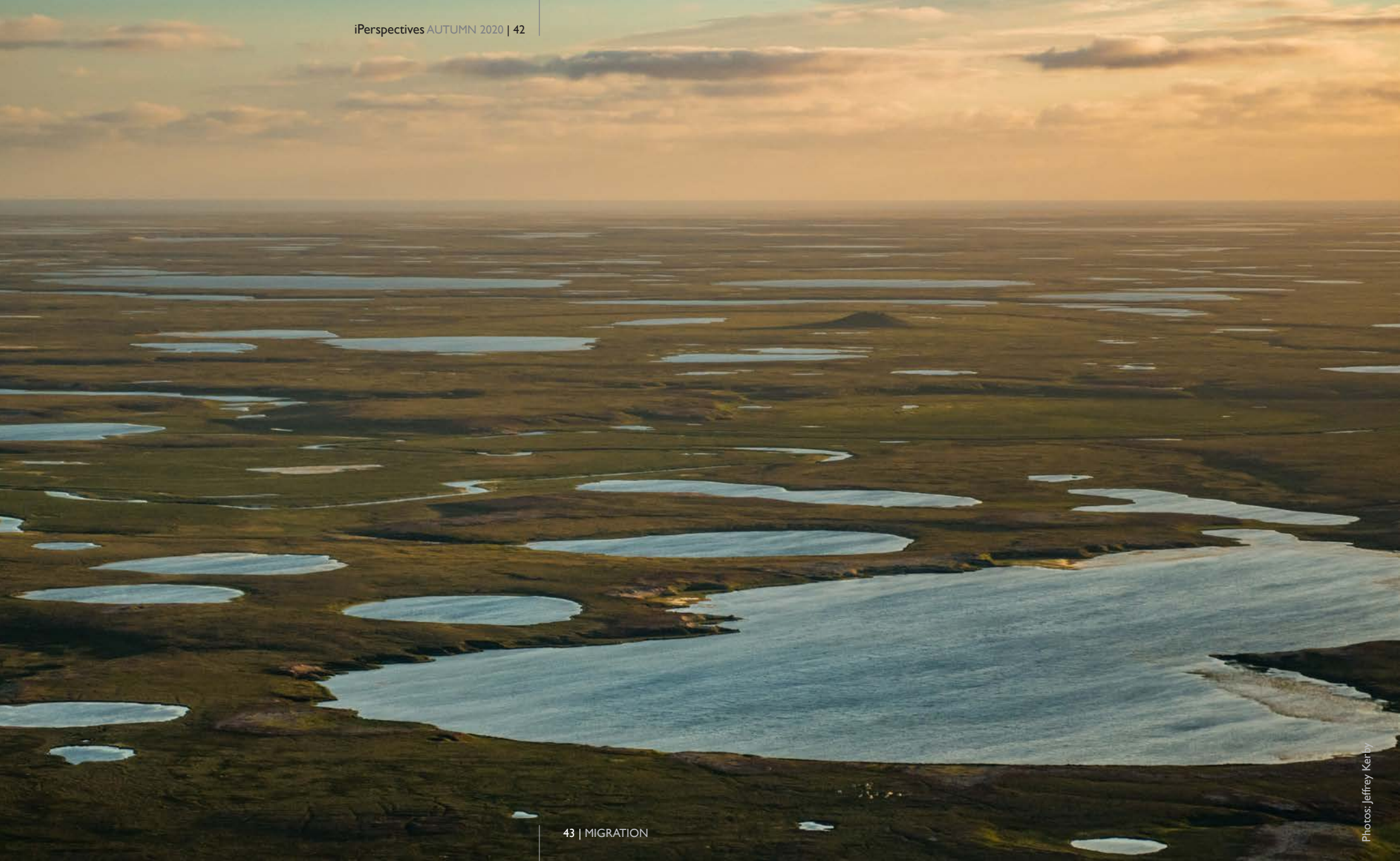


August is a time of frenzied movement on the tundra – that stretch of icy, treeless land that encircles the Arctic Ocean. The summer sun sits low and ever-present on the horizon while small lakes bulge with melt water. Mosquitos roam in blood-seeking clouds, myriad birds settle from their globe-spanning journeys, and meter-long blades of grass rattle in the wind after release from late-melting snows.

*Previous page: Cottongrass on the Siberian tundra*

*Right: The seemingly flat expanse of the Siberian tundra hides numerous thaw lakes, landslides, permafrost features, and temporary camps*

*Below: A redpoll feasting on mosquitos lands on the shoulder of a tundra researcher*





*The research team camp surrounded by dwarf shrubs*

*Top Left: A team member gazing out of a helicopter window above the tundra*

*Centre Left: Sampling meltwater from thawing permafrost*

*Bottom Left: Measuring plant diversity amidst mosquitoes*

In this northwest corner of Russia's Siberia, hundreds of thousands of reindeer are also on the move. They follow a northward wave of young plants, easy nutrition for their energy-starved bodies. The Nenets people of the Yamal Peninsula move with them, managing these herds as they have done for generations. Beneath all of this activity, soils frozen for thousands of years are thawing, being digested by microbes, and sending surges of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere.



*Above: Reindeer on the move; Below: Discussing the recent windstorm*

*Reindeer move to feast on willow shrubs along the Mordy-Yaha River*





I know this story by heart, but after a decade of unbroken summer migrations north to Greenland, Canada, and Russia, I must recite it from 'down south' after a virus moved faster than any of us were prepared for. This year, the tundra will continue its choreography regardless of researcher presence, and we do our best to follow its rhythms from afar. What can we rediscover in old data? Can we detect anything atypical in the satellite imagery? Are the reindeer GPS collars working? Are the Nenets in mobile phone range yet? We all read that Siberia is hotter this summer than at any point in history. That record-setting fires are burning as far north as trees can grow. And that buildings are collapsing as the 'permanently' frozen ground they are moored to turns to a muddy soup...



*Thawing permafrost collapses to form a slump and a small lake as seen from a mapping drone*

*Left: The author launching a landscape mapping drone*

*Right: Researchers work alongside and with the local Nenets community to better understand how reindeer, plants, and weather interact to affect the region's ecology*

*Top Right: Fixing a tent in a storm*

*Centre Right: Researchers coordinating plans in a mosquito swarm*

*Bottom Right: Nenets collaborating with researchers on the reindeer project*



The choreography of the tundra is rapidly changing, it moves in ways that it did not in the past. Next summer, I hope to rejoin this scientific migration north to understand these shifts and their global implications, a small part of a large collaborative effort amongst colleagues at

Aarhus University, the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland, and many others. So I present these photos, a slice in time from a summer in the Arctic – showing people, place, plants and animals in motion, but also a reality already relegated to the past.

#### About the author:

*Jeffrey Kerby is an AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2020-2023). He is an ecologist and geographer interested in plant animal interactions and landscape change in Arctic and alpine systems. Jeff uses photos as data sources for computational analyses, but also as a way to share conservation and science narratives.*

#### Acknowledgements:

*The HUMANOR project field team – many of whom are pictured herein - including Bruce Forbes, Radion Khudi, Tiina Kolari, Pasi Korpelainen, Timo Kumpula, Anton Kuzmin, Roza Laptander, Nina Meschtyb, Anna Skarin, Teemu Tahvanainen, Mariana Verdonen, and our Nenets and Russian collaborators. The National Geographic Society, the Arctic Centre – University of Lapland, and Dartmouth College.*

*August's midnight sun with a Nenets camp on the horizon*

Photo: Jeffrey Kerby

# Migration and Scholarship

Nationalist histories generally showed little or no interest in migrants: once they left, they left the nation's historical imagination

By **Franco De Angelis**



**M**igration has certainly changed all of our scholarly lives and perspectives over the last generation. In my field, a migration perspective has invigorated scholarship, leading to a renewed appreciation that the ancient Greeks were not just to be found in what is today Greece, that, in other words, they were a highly mobile diasporic culture. To arrive at that picture, scholars identified the three key factors at the source of the old view that, together, formed an anachronistic lens through which to view the history of the ancient Greeks. First, modern nationalist ways of writing history were back-projected onto antiquity, which resulted in the view that modern Greece equated ancient Greece. Second, the

*Areas settled by Greeks by the close of the Archaic period*



"Greek Colonization in Archaic Period" by Dipa1965 is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

whole ancient tradition of ancient Greeks who settled outside of Greece was subsumed to this nationalist framework, by being labelled and stigmatized as "colonies." Nationalist histories generally showed little or no interest in migrants: once they left, they left the nation's historical imagination. The practice of thinking about ancient Greece in modern colonial terms can ultimately be traced back to the early Renaissance, with a mistranslation of the ancient Greek word *apoikiai* ("homes away from home") into "colonies". This mistranslation gained considerable momentum and became entrenched in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with modern Greek state formation and European colonial expansion, along with its routine centre and periphery thinking.

## ... a mistranslation of the ancient Greek word *apoikiai* into "colonies"

When they received any attention, these migrants were emphasized as inferior and derivative, pulled down in large part by the backward non-Greeks next to whom they lived. The result in modern narratives was that ancient Greeks migrants lived in underdeveloped or undeveloped circumstances. Third, the Cold War added a final hurdle, in which its divisions and political blocks impacted how we wrote history. Ancient history was no exception: connectivity, integration, and interdisciplinarity were practically nowhere to be seen. It should not cause surprise, therefore, that these three factors worked together to create a lack of interest in the ancient Greek migrants who left Greece.

In the 1990s the subject was ripe for postcolonial scrutiny, thanks in part no doubt to the post World War II-migrations and decolonization. In their train came greater attention to questions of human mobility, migration, and diaspora as subjects in their own right. The result for my field was that the unsuitable ways in which modern imperialism and colonialism negatively affected the study of ancient

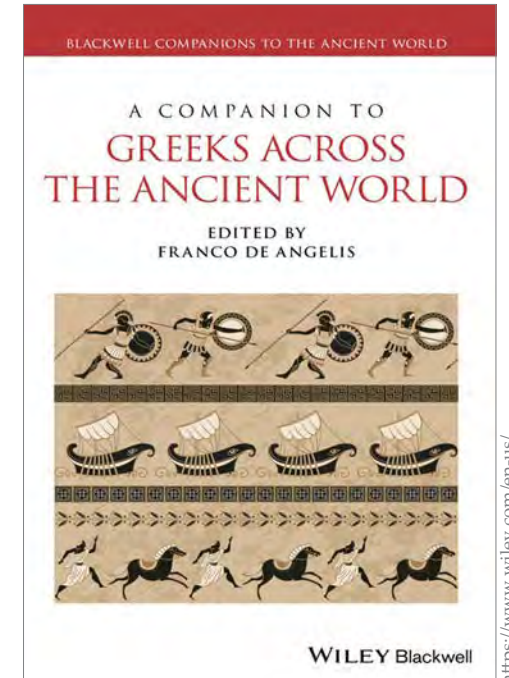
## ... more interconnected than earlier scholars had imagined

Greece began to be put under the microscope. Since then, it has come to be appreciated that Greeks may have founded over 500 "colonies" (or about one-third to one-half of the total number of Greek city-states in the Archaic and Classical periods, which represent the heyday of ancient Greece), which may have been home to more than 40% of the total ancient Greek population. This realization coincided with another new perspective on how the Mediterranean's ecology was essentially microregional. Generally, no one region possessed all the natural and human resources that it needed, and this imposed mobility on its inhabitants who were thus more interconnected and interdependent than earlier scholars had imagined. In other words, the ancient Greeks and their "colonies" could not be separated from one another. Moreover, the people whom the ancient Greeks encountered were often not so backward after all, and the products of their interaction, such as art, were no longer simply downgraded and, instead, came to be viewed with a new theoretical basis. By the start of this century, it has become starkly clear that ancient Greek migrants were a glaring gap in our accounts of ancient Greek history and that they had to be included in a much more systematic and balanced manner than ever before.

Perhaps I am thinking about migration and scholarship these days because my latest edited book has just been published during this pandemic in May, and it focuses on ancient Greek mobility,

migration, and diaspora. Like any edited book published these days, the contributors come from numerous countries, or at least are based there while originally from somewhere elsewhere. Moreover, various parts of the book's editorial and production chains are based in different countries from the publisher (at first located in Malden, MA and then relocating to Hoboken, NJ), through me, the editor, based in Vancouver (but finalizing the manuscript and sending it to press while based in Aarhus and London last year), to the production team based in India and the UK. Most of the scholarly relationships embodied in this book began and have been rekindled as a result

*On ancient Greek mobility, migration, and diaspora*



<https://www.wiley.com/en-us/A+Companion+to+Greeks+Across+the+Ancient+World-p-9781118341339>

## This story contrasts with earlier approaches to scholarship

of academic travel of some sort, whether it was short-term for a conference or the like, or longer-term while on a sabbatical leave. In the case of this book, my original commissioning editor asked to meet me in person while attending a conference held in Vancouver on the campus of the University of British Columbia. With very few exceptions, I know most of my contributors personally through academic mobility and migration of some kind.

This is a story that can be repeated and retold many times by us all; it is hardly unique to any one individual or project. Regardless of the field, this story is of rather recent vintage and contrasts with earlier approaches to scholarship. I can illustrate this with the tale of the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* published in 1996. The first two editions of this standard work (1949 and 1970) pretty much restricted the choice of the contributors to the British Isles, regardless of the expertise of the contributors chosen. With the 1996 third edition began the practice of choosing the best person in the world to write an entry, instead of restricting the search to the national boundaries of the editors. This practice continues today with the fourth edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, which, since 2016, has become fully digital and is updated on a monthly basis. How the subject is conceived of has also expanded in truly awe-inspiring ways, including a greater gamut of entries introduced via the theoretical and methodological advances made since the third edition twenty years before (thankfully, this is

now a digital project, so there are no restrictions of physical space!). For example, what do we mean by “ancient” and “Classical”? The story of the successive editions of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* illustrates in microcosm that by looking globally our respective fields of research have been able to draw on the best ideas and talent, all in the service of research and scholarship. Modern mobilities and migrations and the perspectives that they entail have certainly played a part here.

Migration and scholarship over the last generation have enriched our collective scholarly endeavours, allowing us to forge and build our networks through personal contact and connection with a diverse group of people. Will this pandemic, which has spread and become global via heightened levels of human mobility and migration, cause us to retreat to our national scholarly bubbles and to a “Cold War-like” frostiness characteristic of earlier generations of research and scholarship? Will our respective governments who issue visas and formulate national policies in general instead turn to scoring political points and engendering a culture of fear? These are matters that the history of scholarship has taught us to reflect on.

### About the author:

*Franco De Angelis is Full Professor and Distinguished University Scholar at the University of British Columbia, and is a former AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2018-2019). As an ancient historian and archaeologist, his research focuses on expanding the narrow story we tell about the ancient Greeks by examining their overlooked migrations and diasporas, which represent — literally — the other half of their story. He adopts a two-pronged approach: first, by paying close attention to the underlying ancient and modern historiographies to understand how this situation developed and how it can be rectified, and, second, by adopting a multi- and interdisciplinary methodology that is theoretically informed.*

# Feeling protected? Closed borders in the coronavirus crisis

A combination of the evolutionary and the cultural perspective on pathogen threats offers an interesting view on the border closings

By **Isabel Kusche**



People can perceive immigrants as posing different threats, for example economic, cultural or security threats. The political reactions to the coronavirus crisis associated another threat with migration, namely pathogen threat. Before radical measures such as physical distancing and curfews were

imposed, affecting everyone, an early measure in most countries was to close the borders. In Europe, freedom of movement in the Schengen area was suspended. Border regions that had grown together economically and culturally since the Schengen agreement suddenly found that nationality was still an overriding concern.



specifically prevents only a subset of all possible travels, namely the subset that involves the movement of citizens of one country to another country (although some exceptions applied). Why was it done so readily? Researchers working on the BIS have been interested in connections between the working of the BIS and attitudes to strangers or outgroups in general. They have shown, for example, that people with unfamiliar facial features or habits can elicit an unconscious reaction of disgust, in other words a 'gut reaction'. The varying strength of this reaction is thought to be an effect of individual variations in disgust sensitivity, i.e. slightly different make-ups of the BIS. The reasoning behind this is that the hypersensitive BIS could falsely categorize unfamiliar features as cues of disease and unfamiliar habits as a deviation from behavioural norms that protect against contamination.

Researchers have tried to explain the individual strength

of negative attitudes towards immigrants along these lines, namely as an erroneous reaction of the BIS. However, if such a reaction can be triggered by perceived unfamiliarity (physical or cultural), the reverse conclusion is that the distinction between what is familiar and what is unfamiliar is key to it. Yet, being familiar with something or someone is a result of learning, and learning from others. Therefore, it would seem that even a gut reaction always has a social context.

This brings us to the second, the cultural explanation. According to it, what we find disgusting has nothing to do with the inherent features of the object in question; it is socially constructed and learned from others who share the same beliefs about what is contaminated and what is pure. This gives of course a much stronger role to social context than the one implied by the logic of the BIS. By providing distinctions and schemas that make sense of the world, culture

gives individuals orientation. But other distinctions and schemas, whose content is completely different, would fulfil the same function of orientation. However, a typical additional function of established categories and distinctions is the protection of power differentials in society. It makes the perpetuation of certain categorizations, for example the one that treats immigrants as potentially dangerous for varying reasons, particularly attractive.

This perspective on attitudes towards immigrants highlights the long history of a derogatory rhetoric that associates immigrants and foreigners with being carriers of disease. In the coronavirus crisis, the most blatant example of such a rhetoric was probably US president Trump's attempt to deflect blame for a bad handling of the pandemic by talking of the 'Chinese virus'. But can the willingness to close the borders in Europe, as well as in the US, be explained by referring to culture? The attempt to do so seems to boil down to the argument that politicians still think predominantly in terms of national as opposed to European categories and that they anticipate the citizens of

## The feeling of familiarity is a protection against prejudice

their respective countries to do the same. Political commentaries on the initial failure to coordinate measures against the pandemic at the EU level mostly argued along these lines.

A combination of the evolutionary and the cultural perspective would relieve politicians from some of the blame for lacking the proper European spirit in times of crisis. Facing a largely unknown pathogen threat, the habits and administrative procedures in other countries may have suddenly seemed unfamiliar enough to trigger a gut reaction in favour of closing the borders. However, this reaction is also built on stereotypes, according to which people in other countries perhaps lacked the discipline or the insight to follow the behavioural measures deemed effective against the virus. The ease with which what seemed familiar, namely

our neighbouring countries where we had been before, could suddenly tip towards the unfamiliar and potentially threatening, was a worrying experience. The sooner the borders open again completely, the easier it will be to get back to the feeling of familiarity with those on the other side. And this feeling is a protection against prejudice.

### References:

- Aarøe, L., Petersen, M. B., and Arceneaux, K. 2017. "The Behavioral Immune System Shapes Political Intuitions: Why and How Individual Differences in Disgust Sensitivity Underlie Opposition to Immigration." *American Political Science Review* 111 (2): 277-294.
- Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. London and New York: Routledge
- Elias, N., and Scotson, J. L. 1965. *The established and the outsiders; a sociological enquiry into community problems*. London: F. Cass
- Hellwig, T., and Sinno, A. 2017. "Different groups, different threats: Public attitudes towards immigrants". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(3): 339-358.
- Kusche, I., and Barker, J. L. 2019. "Pathogens and immigrants: a critical appraisal of the behavioural immune system as an explanation of prejudice against ethnic outgroups. *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Link, B. G., and Phelan, J. C. 2001. "Conceptualizing stigma." *Annual*

*Review of Sociology* 27: 363-385.

Nesse, R. M. 2005. "Natural selection and the regulation of defenses - A signal detection analysis of the smoke detector principle." *Evolution and Human Behavior* 26 (1):88-105.

Petersen, E., McCloskey, B., Hui, D. S. et al. 2020. « COVID-19 travel restrictions and the International Health Regulations – Call for an open debate on easing travel restrictions." *International Journal of Infectious Diseases* 94: 88-90.

Schaller, M. 2006. "Parasites, behavioral defenses, and the social psychological mechanisms through which cultures are evoked." *Psychological Inquiry* 17 (2): 96-101

### About the author:

Isabel Kusche is a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany. She is a former AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2015-2018), and received her doctorate from Bielefeld University in 2008. She studied sociology at Dresden University in Germany and the New School of Social Research in New York City. Between 2002 and 2015 she held academic positions at various German universities (Jena, Bielefeld, Osnabrück, Kiel). Her research focuses on political communication and the (re-)production of political power in contemporary democracies, with a special focus on political clientelism and corruption, the impact of digital media on society as well as sociological theory.

## The closing of borders specifically prevents only a subset of all possible travels



# Between Representation and Repression

*Some notes on the refugees to Europe*

By Tijen Tunali

On 2 September 2015 the major TV channels around the world showed the image of a three-year-old Kurdish Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, in the Mediterranean Sea, whose lifeless body was found on the shore of a beach in Turkey. That summer for many people enjoying the Aegean beaches in Turkey and Greece a bitter reality would cut their breath into two when on the beach they kept seeing the lifejackets and clothes of the people who were drowned crossing the sea. While taking this reality as a slap on the face, I saw a privileged artist, who can cross the borders easily with his famed artist identity and considerable income, mimicking this image to give a message to the world. Between 2015 and 2019 there has been a big boom in the art exhibitions on the topics of exile, refugees and immigration across Europe, similar to the multiculturalist exhibitions in the 1990s. Observing the bleak representation of the immigrants and refugees embedded in 'difference' as a dissociated and ahistorical quality that holds little relevance to the actual histories and day-to-day realities of those constructed as ethnically, culturally and socially different, I have been thinking: how can we, as artists, curators and academics do justice to people's lived histories without reducing them to statistics, figures, images and discourses? And, as a general public, how can we avoid reinforcing our identity as the privileged Self as opposed to the Other 'the victim'?

The agreed definition of 'immigrant' itself describes the process almost entirely from the very beginning, takes it briefly and makes all other categories invisible: once you have been reduced to refugee and immigrant status, you are rarely referred to as worker, academic, shop keeper or peasant. The title 'refugee' or 'immigrant' is added to the beginning of each status; you are reduced as a workforce, refugee artist, immigrant business

owner, exiled writer, etc. The worst, of course, appears with the discriminatory and sometimes denigrating language: Syrian thief, Afghan garbage collector, Bulgarian mafia, etc. In fact, in most European countries during the 1990s, the term 'refugee' was slowly replaced by the term 'asylum seeker' in media and political language. Whereas 'refugee' implies an active attempt at flight from a threat or privation, 'asylum seeker' suggests a purely passive creature, whose status is 'genuine' or 'bogus'; the host state would decide after meticulous investigations.

May it be a stigmatizing, victimizing, or empathizing language, it is constructed around the infinite and eternity of gratitude in the everlasting dynamic of host-immigrant. If you have taken refuge in a country you, your children, and perhaps your grandchildren are demoted, your life continues with all the requirements and expectations of appropriate submission and obedience to the place and its people that have given you 'a new life.' Therefore, starting from its definition, immigration is never just losing a homeland. Consenting to the endless chain of obedience means always being forced to stay in determined forms, and if there is a 'thing' offered to you, it is expected that you accept it gratefully and try to be as humble as possible. You are always forced into an exemplary demonstration of your identity and being stuck there.

**How can we, as artists, curators and academics do justice to people's lived histories?**



A drawing by a child living in Moria camp in Lesbos, Greece, 2019. One of the dozens of children aged 6-12 who attempted suicide in Moria.

This process is not just societal but functional: it is used as an exemplary object to show the citizens of the host country how precious their homeland, rights, and especially, state systems are. It connotes the unwritten social agreement in the society: the hosts privileged to be born where they live are generously giving to those who left their home. As philosopher Jacques Rancière argues, when refugees and immigrants are thought of in terms of victims, the result is a hollowing out of the political quality of human rights, where the act of giving refuge becomes akin to an act of charity. For Rancière the consensus about human rights ultimately serves to ratify the decisions of states and elites:

*Ultimately, those rights appear actually empty. They seem to be of no use. And when they are of no use, you do the same as charitable persons do with their old clothes. You give them to the poor. Those rights that appear to be useless in their place are sent abroad, along with medicine and clothes, to people deprived of medicine, clothes, and rights. It is in this way, as the result of this process, that the Rights of Man become the rights of those who have no rights, the rights of bare human beings subjected to inhuman repression and inhuman conditions of existence. They become humanitarian rights, the rights of those who cannot enact them, the victims of the absolute denial of right.<sup>1</sup>*

As irregular movements of asylum seekers and migrants increased in 2015, the EU, under

Germany's leadership, acting hastily out of fear to externalize migration, and keep it at bay in locations designated as 'hotspots', namely the five Greek islands; Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros, and Kos. As it is observed in the 2016 EU-Turkey statement (EUTS) the description of 'crisis' is related to prevention of the refugees from moving on to other EU countries from Turkey.<sup>2</sup> The EUTS clarifies that 'all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands as from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey.' It further explains the decision that in order to enforce returns all asylums claims must be processed on the Greek islands. The Statement clearly prioritizes border security over the protection of human rights. As this turns the Greek islands into immigration detention centers, the refugees lose full access to fair and effective asylum application processes.

Last year 74,600 refugees reached Greece. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) data, this number is 50 % more than 2018.<sup>3</sup> Today, 45,000 refugees are struggling to survive in unspeakable conditions on the Aegean islands they have reached by boats. Although there are many studies on forced immigration and refuge to Europe from the Middle East, there are so many gaps in the scholarship and the collected data by various agencies. For example, the number of those people that identify as LGBTQI individuals are unknown. Over 175 million queer individuals worldwide are estimated to live under persecutory environments.<sup>4</sup> Little is known about the minority of LGBTQI refugees who do manage to file asylum applications based on sexuality in refugee-receiving nations. Yet, neither the UNHCR nor the majority of the 176 countries that share asylum statistics with the UNHCR maintains statistics or hold any other form of data concerning the

LGBTQI refugees.<sup>5</sup>

The Greek islands are perceived as a threshold for asylum seekers while acting as a border for the EU that cannot be passed. There are currently 22,000 asylum seekers on the island of Mytilene alone and almost all of them live in the area of Moria camp with the capacity of maximum 3000 people. My visit to the Moria Camp in 2019 to try to implement a summer art therapy workshop for the children has struck me in ways that I could have never imagined. This is where children talk about the desire for dying.<sup>6</sup>

As the containers used as dwellings inside the Moria camp are extremely insufficient, a majority of the refugees stay in tents in the camping area. They told me that winters on the island get very cold, windy and wet. In the rain, mud flows into the tents, everything gets wet and does not dry for days. Each portable toilet serves hundreds of people. Hygiene is an unaffordable luxury. The sharp smell of uncollected garbage hills is nothing like one could describe, as well as the screams and cries of children. I had prepared myself for the physical conditions, as I was warned about them, but I could not have prepared myself for what the children and young people told me, had I even tried my best. 'I wish I wasn't born gay, I wish our boat had sunk' and 'I cannot take it anymore, I hope I die tomorrow' are only two sentences among many against that one feels completely powerless.

**This is where children talk about the desire for dying.**



*"Dreams lost" by Atefeh Fayazie from Afghanistan, Moria camp in Lesbos, Greece, 2019. After taking art classes taught by volunteers of several NGOs.*

of schooling that the NGOs provide, although miles away, is the only helpline for those children to keep their sanity. In early April 2020 Naoko Imoto, who is Chief of Education at the UNICEF Partnership Office in Greece reported that, among some 3,000 refugee and migrant children of school age on the Aegean Islands who had access to non-formal education, none of them could continue because of COVID-19 social distancing guidelines.<sup>8</sup>

In Moria, when I asked the young people aged 17-27 what they dreamt for the future, almost all of them said 'living in Europe' almost always accompanied by another statement 'but I am afraid that I will be stigmatized.' The discriminatory and endless asylum procedures of Greece and the difficulties of the physical conditions of the camp are added to the PTSD that a significant number of them suffer. The LGBTQI asylum seekers in the confined environment of the camp are exposed to more violence and abuse than heterosexual ones. They are forced to live the gender and sexual norms of the heteronormative patriarchal system that prevails in a very narrow space. Most of them described Moria as 'a true hell' and added 'I feel more in danger here than in my country'.

They are conscious that if they can reach the countries they want, they often have to start their asylum processes from the beginning. An asylum seeker needs to persuade the decision-makers that their quest for refuge is a credible one and this becomes a little more burdensome for queer refugees than for others. Some of the asylum seekers expressed to me their anxiety about having to prove their queerness to hetero-centric state

As they reach the island, often their psychological traumas based on crossing the sea on unsafe boats deepen. Apart from the vicious fights, some resulting in deadly stabbings, drug use, sexual harassment and rape, as well as ethnic and religious conflicts cause children to live under a constant and significant amount of fear. The conditions are even more unbearable for the unaccompanied minors. There are over 1,100 unaccompanied and separated refugee children on the Greek islands.<sup>7</sup> Being able to take advantage

## ... of what it means to be queer and what it means to be a desired immigrant.

authorities. Many countries across the EU still use psychologists, psychiatrists and sexologists to determine the sexuality of its asylum applicants. It is known to asylum seekers that even judges may not shy away from asking legal representatives for medical evidence to prove their claimants to be queer. In many publications on migration, it is well argued that European countries' asylum systems are turning non-normative identities into active accomplices in the perpetuation of limited Western hetero-normative understandings of what it means to be queer and what it means to be a desired immigrant.

The evaluation procedures for refugees and asylum seekers solely focus on what they have been going through in their own country and why they cannot go back there. As a young Afghan gay man pointed out to me, the traumas that happen to them on the way will never be asked or recorded. The unbearable conditions and human rights violations experienced by refugees after they enter to European borders rarely make the news headlines, neither are they taken into account in integration procedures, although irreversible wounds are deepened on the way to their 'dreamt new life.'

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Rancière, 'Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?' The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 103, No:2/3, Spring/Summer 2004, pp. 307

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/73592>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.refworld.org/docid/524d418f4.html>

<sup>5</sup> In Europe, Belgium is the only EU country that systematically collects and publishes the number of queer asylum applications

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-50814521/lesbos-migrant-camp-children-say-they-want-to-die?fbclid=IwAR0Bc8UCrZorF\\_kpae5En5D5-HnqJhF93WrS5ty\\_fEhigC0uHZY2XCwDLyI](https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-50814521/lesbos-migrant-camp-children-say-they-want-to-die?fbclid=IwAR0Bc8UCrZorF_kpae5En5D5-HnqJhF93WrS5ty_fEhigC0uHZY2XCwDLyI)

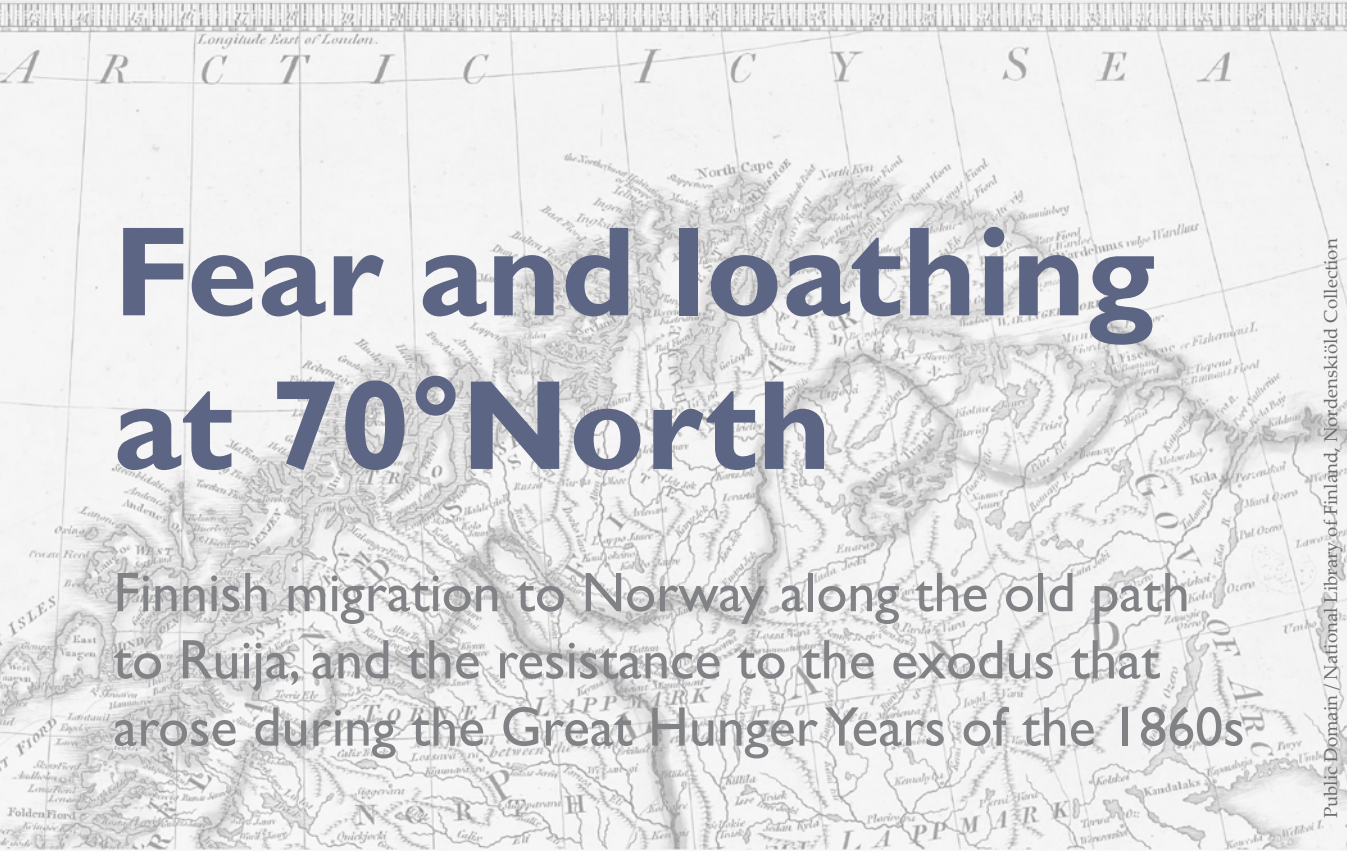
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/21084/children-of-moria-a-generation-lost>

<sup>8</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/greece/schools-shutdown-adds-misery-children-trapped-greek-islands-refugee-camps>



### About the author:

Tijen Tunali is an interdisciplinary scholar whose research focuses on contemporary aesthetico-political practices and relations in art activism and radical social praxis, and an AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2020-2021). She was a Le Studium/ Marie Skłodowska Curie Postdoctoral Fellow (2018-2019) at the University of Tours-France. She received her BS from Istanbul University in Business Administration/Economics, BA in Fine Arts from the State University of New York at Binghamton, MA in Visual Studies at the State University of New York at Buffalo and PhD in Art History, Theory and Criticism from the University of New Mexico.



# Fear and loathing at 70° North

Finnish migration to Norway along the old path to Ruija, and the resistance to the exodus that arose during the Great Hunger Years of the 1860s

By **Andrew Newby**

**T**he historic province of Finnmark – known as *Ruija* to the Finns and the Kvens – lies by the Arctic Ocean at one of Europe’s northernmost extremities. It is hardly recognised as a key destination in the continent’s migration history. And yet, for many centuries, the Ruija

Path (*Ruijanpolku*) north to the Varangerfjord was trodden by Finns looking for work (temporary or permanent) and subsistence. Indeed, this long historical connection was given formal recognition in 1977 with the inauguration of an Immigrant Monument in the town of Vadsø (or, Čáhcesuolu

/ Vesisaari, in North Saami and Finnish / Kven respectively). In autumn 2018, not long after leaving AIAS, I was invited to give a paper at a symposium, “Seeking Refuge: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Refugees and Asylum”, at the Roosevelt Centre in Middelburg. In my presentation, I outlined

Left: Detail of Finnmark (from James Wyld, *A New Map of Sweden and Norway*, (London, 1840)).

Right: Vadsø Immigrant Memorial (Ensio Seppänen, 1977)

three historical examples from my research into the Great Finnish Famine of the 1860s, when Finns – facing hunger and disease – had to take to the road once more in order to find sustenance. One of these examples was the migration along the old path to *Ruija*, and the local resistance to this exodus that arose during the worst of the crisis years.

In the spring of 1868, at the nadir of a catastrophe when up to ten per cent of Finland’s population died (making it in percentage terms one of history’s worst famines), the arrival of so many Finnish immigrants in Norwegian Finnmark started to cause serious disquiet among the local authorities. Much of the subsequent rhetoric used in the public discourse is familiar to anyone who has followed



migration / refugee debates in Europe in the last decade.

The *Finnmarksposten* newspaper (February 1868) complained that the “influx”

from Finland and Swedish Norrland – which was also suffering from famine – was “exceedingly great”, because “the distress of these people is as great as it has ever been.” The newspaper acknowledged that it was discussing a historical migration route, but added that the arrival of so many “from the other side of the mountains” would mean that the immigrants

**Finns, facing hunger and disease, had to take to the road once more in order to find sustenance**

jordbäfningar låtit känna sig.

**Sverige och Norge.**

I le Nord för den 11 dennes läses:

"Tidningarne från Christiania innehålla detaljer om den hungersödd, som härjar i Finland och om de följder, som den har för Norges angränsande provinser. Talrika familjer anlända från norra Finland till norska Finnmarken. I Warangersfjorden räknar man redan 3 eller 4,000 invandrare, och de i dessa trakter bosatte norrmännen börja frukta för sin säkerhet till lif och egendom, som måhända icke skall så alldeles samvetesgrannt respekteras af denna behöfvande hop. Medel till lifsbergning finnes icke i synnerligt öfverflöd ens i de mest gynnade distrikterna i Finnmarken, och om fiskets slår felt är det att befara, att hungersnöden utsträcker sig öfver hela nordliga delen af Norge. Hvad innevärande i Norrbotten och svenska Lappland afgår, vet man att deras ekonomiska ställning är löga gynnsammare, än deras finska granar. Af farhåga för en tillväxt af befolkningen, som icke skulle stå i förhållande till landets tillgångar, lära åtskilliga af Finnmarkens innehavare vara betänkta på att vända

could not be properly cared for, and also that the local inhabitants' "own" resources would be severely diminished. In asking for this story to be shared widely in Finland and Northern Sweden, the writer hoped that the distressed populations of those regions would be dissuaded from travelling north. As the famine conditions persisted in both Finland and Swedish Norrland, desperation drove ever more families northwards. By March 1868, Norwegian newspapers reported that "three or four thousand immigrants" had been counted in the Varanger region, where the local population "had started to fear for their life and property, which might not be conscientiously respected by this desperate throng". Dissuading potential migrants with newspaper circulars was now deemed ineffective, and so, "concerned about the growth of population, which is not in line with the country's resources, many Finnmark residents are considering turning to the Norwegian government, with the request that a detachment of troops should be sent to this province for the purpose

Detail from *Finlands Allmänna Tidning*, 23 March 1868

of monitoring the Finnish immigrants and, if necessary, returning them to their own country." This constant influx of Finns, concluded the *Finnmarksposten* article, "must provoke every right-thinking Norwegian's fury." Despite the fact that many of those living in the Varanger region were of Kven or Finnish ethnicity, therefore, the sheer number of new Finns that were supposed to be "flooding" in to the area meant that it was necessary to construct a difference between "Norwegians" and "Finns". In other words, a political definition of nationality was used in the newspaper's rhetoric to override any ethnic or cultural affinities.

Meanwhile, reflecting a more general European trend towards philanthropy – and more than a little metropolitan detachment, given that the Norwegian capital lies some 2,000 km from the offices of the "northernmost newspaper in the world" – the response from editors in Oslo (Christiania) to their northern compatriots' complaints was unsympathetic, even withering:

*[the Finnmarksposten editorial] proves that today's concept of humanitarianism and reciprocity between nations is not greatly*

*appreciated around the 70th degree (of latitude)... fears for the increasing numbers of Finns are reminiscent of the Egyptian Pharaoh's similar fear of the increasing numbers of Israelites, and it is quite fortunate for Norway's reputation that Hammerfest's newspaper does not have many overseas readers. In a nutshell, Aftenbladet notes quite correctly that the cost of sending of a warship and troops to the Varangerfjord would equate to the expenditure necessary for preventing Finnish immigrants from dying of hunger, and that it would be more worthwhile for the Norwegian people to make sacrifices in order to save those unfortunates than drive them out. This will undoubtedly also be the line that will be taken by the government, which does not seem to harbour any distrust of this immigration.*

As well as the humanitarian imperative, the view from the capital was that Finnish immigration would have a

beneficial economic impact on Norwegian Finnmark, not least because of the apparent paradox that the region was simultaneously experiencing significant out-migration to North America. In this argument, the incoming Finns were not construed as a threat, but rather as ideal replacements for the labour being haemorrhaged, because they "may be somewhat uneducated, but they are hardworking and wonderfully capable of enduring the severity of the climate".

In this single historical example from the north of Europe, therefore, many familiar tropes and arguments from more recent "migration debates" can be seen. It is hard, for example, to read about the potential threat posed by the "three or four thousand" potential migrants to Finnmark, without picturing a British politician a few years ago

**A political definition of nationality was used in the newspaper's rhetoric to override any ethnic or cultural affinities**

## The response of urban “elites” arguably demonstrated a lack of empathy for local concerns

campaigning in front of a poster exclaiming “Breaking Point,” as he tried to make a political point about freedom of movement within the European Union.

Another parallel might be seen in the response of urban / metropolitan “elites” to the news coming from the far north, which arguably demonstrated a lack of empathy for local concerns, and sought to shame the inhabitants of Finnmark for sully Norway’s international reputation. This was a time

when the urban middle- and upper-classes of Oslo were – in common with many others around Europe – busying themselves with organising subscriptions, lotteries and charity balls to raise funds for the starving Finns. “Telescopic philanthropy”, as Charles Dickens scornfully referred to it in the 1860s, may have been all the rage, but the smugness and condescension in the metropolitan reports about Finnmark expose an internal

disconnect which can be seen in many European countries today.

Marcella and Ring (2003: 9) wrote, perhaps rather romantically, of “the beauty, the mystique, and the human impulse to migrate”. Historical examples certainly support the idea that there is a human need to find a means of living, which is a key driver of migration. These examples, however, also expose some less romantic human impulses, and the relative ease with which people previously considered part of an ingroup can be othered if they are perceived to be an economic or social threat, or (in another parallel with the Swedish / Norwegian / Finnish border in 2020) a risk to public health.

### About the author:

Andrew G. Newby is University Lecturer in Nordic Studies at the University of Helsinki, and was Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND Senior Research Fellow at AIAS in 2017-2018. His latest book, *Finland’s Great Famine 1856-68*, will be published by Palgrave in 2021.



Photo: Eliza Kreatari

# Space, the final frontier.

## But, should we venture NOW?

By Alfonso Blázquez-Castro



“Launch of Falcon 9 rocket carrying the Crew Dragon spacecraft” by NASA/Joel Kowsky

*Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its continuing mission: to explore strange new worlds. To seek out new life and new civilizations. To boldly go where no one has gone before!*

Captain Jean-Luc Picard of Enterprise D and E

Indeed, space, the final frontier. For Star Trek and Sci-Fi fans around the world space conquest sparks the imagination and fantasies of a better, brighter future. A few weeks ago a remarkable step was taken in this direction when SpaceX Demo-2 made its maiden flight (Figure 1). This achievement will probably rekindle the flame of space conquest. The 2020-2030 decade will probably witness a resurgence of manned space missions unheard of since the late 1970s. USA and China consider reaching the Moon in the next ten years as one of their priorities, with serious promises of establishing a permanent lunar base. Russia is not behind and India also has an ongoing lunar research program, with probe Chandrayaan-2 launched in 2019 in search for lunar water resources. Mars is the jewel of the crown for the moment. Serious plans for manned missions between 2030 and 2040

are in development. Thus, the stage is not yet set but is clearly on its way for humans to finally start colonization of the solar system.

### From Earth to the void: space emigration

The question now is not if we are capable of colonizing the solar system. That is a yes, in a shorter or longer term. The question seems to be: should we set out of Earth with our current civilization model? We are facing a plethora of unresolved issues and it is unclear if we are truly capable, or willing, to respond to them. Above all, there is the menace of global warming and the ensuing climate change driven by it. However, every year more CO<sub>2</sub> is poured into the atmosphere than the previous

## What drives us to the stars? Is it curiosity? Or is it necessity?

Figure 1 (Previous page): Launch of SpaceX Demo-2 on May 30th 2020, the event can be considered the resumption of space conquest.

Source: NASA/Joel Kowsky - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nasahqphoto/49953835192/in/photostream/>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=90807538>

year. There is a global problem with the amounts of plastic being produced and improperly recycled. Also, many of these plastics produce a chemical pollution by liberating hazardous components that end up incorporated into trophic chains. There is a very serious problem with the way we use and consume resources of all kinds. Last, but not least, we are currently facing a new threat: the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The global reaction to it does not call for a quick and effective recovery.

With these matters in mind, it would seem that introspective second thoughts on our fitness for space colonization should be given an opportunity. Put in a few words: What drives us to the stars? Is it curiosity? Or is it necessity? If it were

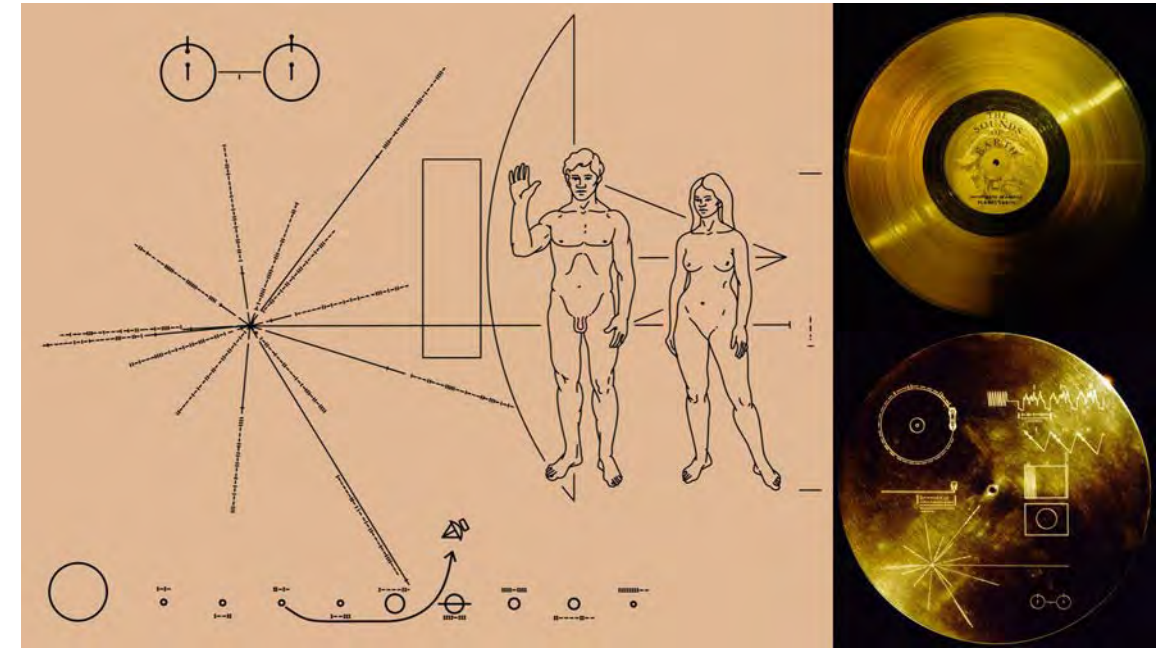


Figure 2: Messages to the stars. The Pioneer plaque (left) and the Voyager golden disc (right, front face on top and reverse face at bottom). They provide detailed information about us and how to find Earth.

Sources: Pioneer plaque - [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pioneer\\_plaque.svg#/media/File:Pioneer\\_plaque.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pioneer_plaque.svg#/media/File:Pioneer_plaque.svg); Golden disc 1 - [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Sounds\\_of\\_Earth\\_-\\_GPN-2000-001976.jpg#/media/File:The\\_Sounds\\_of\\_Earth\\_-\\_GPN-2000-001976.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Sounds_of_Earth_-_GPN-2000-001976.jpg#/media/File:The_Sounds_of_Earth_-_GPN-2000-001976.jpg); Golden disc 2 - [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Sounds\\_of\\_Earth\\_Record\\_Cover\\_-\\_GPN-2000-001978.jpg#/media/File:The\\_Sounds\\_of\\_Earth\\_Record\\_Cover\\_-\\_GPN-2000-001978.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Sounds_of_Earth_Record_Cover_-_GPN-2000-001978.jpg#/media/File:The_Sounds_of_Earth_Record_Cover_-_GPN-2000-001978.jpg)

to be curiosity, we could envision a civilization which has achieved an equilibrium with the world, both living (avoiding or reversing climate change, minimal pollution, stable population) and non-living (efficient resources use, renewable energy consumption). Under this scenario, curiosity

would be the drive to reach and study space (...to explore strange new worlds). As explorers, we will bring with us our model of living: respectful, equilibrate, non-expansive.

If necessity is what drives us (current trend), then, again, we will be exporting tiny pieces of

our model of living: consuming, expansive, disrespectful to us and to the universe. We will move away because our home will have been consumed, it will be a matter of survival. Think for a moment: which is the main premise for restarting space conquest: profitability. We go back to space because

## We go back to space because it is *valuable*, not because it is *interesting*.

it is *valuable*, not because it is *interesting*. This speaks a lot of us, speaks about our priorities. There is a possibility that, perhaps having to collaborate to reach the planets, the stars, the very process will change us. Carl Sagan spoke about this: “*By the time we reach the nearest stars, we will have changed.*” I hope he was right, maybe the last hope in these matters.

### From the void to Earth: space immigration

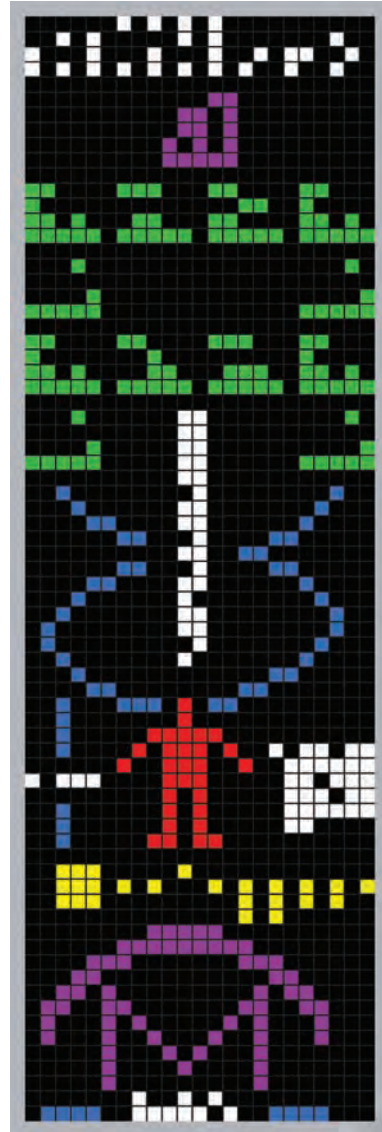
Moving outside Earth is one side of the coin. What about inviting others to come and visit? Is this a wise course of action? Or, more properly, has this been a wise decision? Because the invitation, well invitations, are already traveling across space.

Between 1972 and 1977 four probes (Pioneers 10 and 11, and Voyagers 1 and 2) were launched to explore the solar

system and, ultimately, to reach the stars at some point in the far future. The Pioneers each carried a plaque (see Figure 2, left panel) that provided instructions as to how to interpret the drawings on it. As can be seen, information is displayed on our appearance, our size relative to the space probe, that our species is comprised of two genders, etc. But, more critical, our position in the galaxy is clearly indicated in relation to 14 pulsars (radial diagram in the middle left). Someone intelligent enough can accurately pinpoint our position in the galaxy. Then, it is indicated that the probe comes from the third planet in the solar system (bottom of diagram). The Voyagers carried one golden disc each (see Figure 2, right panels) which provided even more information to potential receptors. Between the Pioneers and the Voyagers a radio message was broadcast from the Arecibo radio telescope in Puerto Rico on November 16th 1974 (Figure 3). In line

Figure 3: The Arecibo message. This encoded message was sent on November 16th 1974 at a frequency of 2.38 gigahertz towards M13 globular star cluster. At present, the message is more than 45 light years from Earth.

Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arecibo\\_message.svg#/media/File:Arecibo\\_message.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arecibo_message.svg#/media/File:Arecibo_message.svg)



## What does History tell us about our first reactions to new encounters?

with the probe's plaques and discs, important information regarding details of our biochemical composition, appearance, dimensions and localization were broadcast towards the M13 globular star cluster. It will reach the cluster in 25,000 years. Currently, the electromagnetic wave carrying the message is more than 45 light years away, potentially having crossed several tens of stars and their planetary systems.

When I first think of these initiatives, I rejoice. I feel hope in that someone will listen and reply. Hoping that we can confirm that we are not alone, that life is an unavoidable property of the universe. But, on second thought... Let's do some reverse psychology. Let's assume that as you read these lines, breaking news will start informing that an interstellar message is being received from deep space. What would be our first, genuine feeling? Hope? Or fear, suspicion? And then, I am presuming this knowledge

is made common knowledge: no secret agencies, no military. What does History tell us about our first reactions to new encounters?

### *Per aspera ad astra*

*Per aspera ad astra*. “Through hardships to the stars”. This phrase is widely employed in space programs, air forces and science-fiction novels. It usually takes the meaning that huge scientific and technical efforts must be mobilized to attain planetary and star travel. Something quite true. But I would like to introduce an even more important meaning: hardship, here, is meant to be to change *ourselves*. We have the ethical mandate to evolve and become better before we have the right to venture into space. We must earn our place in space, space has not been given to us.

I am realistic. We will most probably colonize and exploit space before we question ourselves about these matters. But it is a first step if some think

otherwise and reflect on this so that others, perhaps with more influence, will hesitate before rushing into the unknown too boldly. I am realistic but an ember of hope still burns deep, a hope for things to change for the better, a hope that keeps whispering “*These are the voyages....*”



### About the author:

Alfonso Blázquez-Castro is an Assistant Professor of Genetics in the Department of Biology at the Autonomous University of Madrid, and is a former AIAS-COFUND Fellow (2014 - 2016). He received his PhD in Genetics and Cell Biology at the Autonomous University of Madrid in 2010. Alfonso's main scientific interests deal with biological responses to different energy forms and ROS as cellular metabolic modulators.

## CONTRIBUTORS @ AIAS

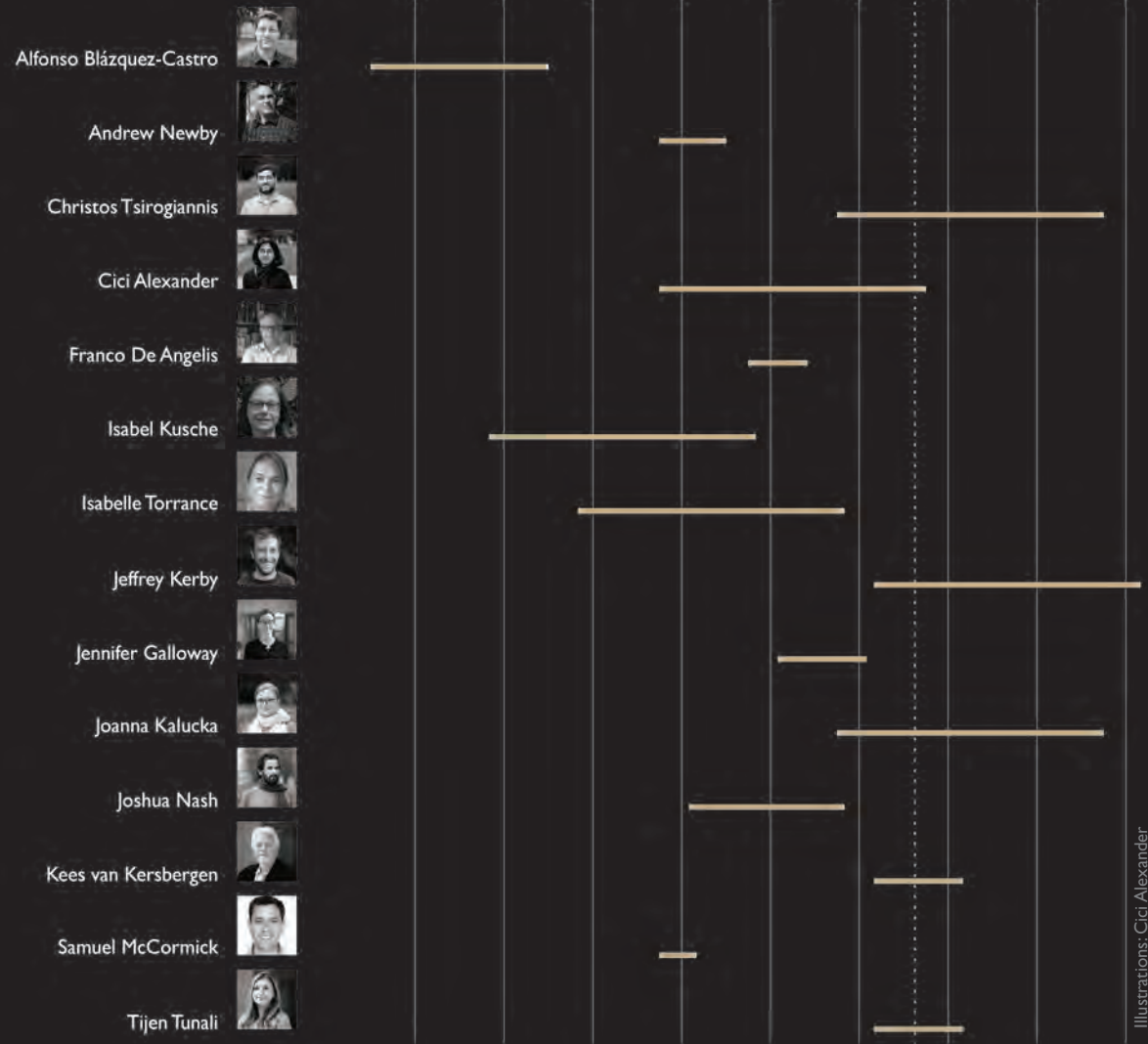




Photo: Lars Kruse



Research Fellowships at AIAS are funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no 754513 and the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 609033 and the Aarhus University Research Foundation (AUFF).

## PREVIOUS ISSUES



Issue 1 Spring 2020

### Editors

Cici Alexander, Jennifer Galloway,  
Sâmia Joca & Thomas Tauris



### Editors

Cici Alexander  
Jennifer Galloway  
Joanna Kalucka  
Kees van Kersbergen

### Graphic Design

Cici Alexander

### ISSN

2597-0453

### Published by

Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies  
<https://aias.au.dk/research/iperspective/>



Aarhus University  
Høegh-Guldbergs Gade 6B  
DK-8000 Aarhus C  
Denmark

Email: [info@aias.au.dk](mailto:info@aias.au.dk)  
Tel: +45 87 15 35 57  
Website: <https://aias.au.dk/>

### Images

Front Cover: "Night at the Wave" by Max Seigal, Marble Canyon, Arizona © Max Seigal 2018  
<http://www.maxwilderness.com/night-skysale/the-wave>

Back Cover: 'After a windstorm' by Jeffrey Kerby, Siberian Tundra © Jeffrey Kerby 2017

iPerspectives

Issue 2

AUTUMN 2020



An interdisciplinary magazine by Research Fellows  
at the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS),  
Aarhus University, Denmark.



**AIAS**  
AARHUS INSTITUTE  
OF ADVANCED STUDIES