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The Border Within: Vietnamese Migrants Transforming Ethnic Nationalism in Berlin

Friday, March 11, 2022 | 12:00PM - 1:30PM Pacific Time Will be held via Zoom (This Event May Be Recorded)



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Discussant: Irene Bloemraad

Irene Bloemraad is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley and the founding director of Berkeley's Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative (BIMI). Bloemraad studies how migrants become incorporated into the political communities where they live, and the consequences of migration for politics and understandings of membership.



When the Berlin Wall fell, Germany united in a wave of euphoria and solidarity. Also caught in the current were Vietnamese border crossers who had left their homeland after its reunification in 1975. Unwilling to live under socialism, one group resettled in West Berlin as refugees. In the name of socialist solidarity, a second group arrived in East Berlin as contract workers. The Border Within paints a portrait of these disparate Vietnamese migrants' encounters with each other in the post-socialist city of Berlin. This book uncovers how 20th-century state formation and international migration—together, border crossings—generate enduring migrant classifications. In doing so, border crossings fracture shared ethnic, national, and religious identities in powerful ways.

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