



THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF FORCED MIGRATION (IASFM)
WILL BE HOSTED BY

THE DEPARTMENT OF BALKAN, SLAVIC, AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA, THESSALONIKI, GREECE

AND THE LABORATORY FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURES, GENDER, AND BORDERS

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IASFM 17:

Whither Refugees? Restrictionism, Crises and Precarity Writ Large

INTRODUCTION

Never since the Second World War have refugees faced such life and death alternatives with nowhere to turn, and faced with increased restrictionisms. The case of Greece epitomizes these new global phenomena, which have been analogous to what the poorest parts of the global south have been experiencing for decades and of what may lie ahead. Holding the 17th IASFM conference in Thessaloniki makes it possible to reflect on the variety of predicaments of refugees in the 21st century; the convergence of longer and fragmented routes and multiple modes of travel; the impact of economies of austerities on refugee lives; and the emergence of new responses to these crises.

The aim of this conference is to address the changes in global refugee movements, responses and debates and to place them in historical perspectives. Given the current

world situation, it is necessary to bring refugees squarely back into academic, policy, non-governmental and citizen debates and praxis.

THEMES

The Program Committee invites academics, policy makers and practitioners to submit proposals for Organized Panels, Roundtables, Media and Artistic presentations, and Individual Papers for sessions, which the Committee will organize according to themes and sub-themes. Preference will be given to organized panels and roundtables over individual presentations. Below we list the overarching themes around which paper panels and roundtables should be organized:

1. Crises, Precarity and Refugeeeness

This dimension will address the increasing intensity and complexity of the refugee phenomenon. As new wars becoming more widespread, journeys more dangerous, the increasing roles of traffickers and smugglers as information brokers, and even after reaching safety, refugees are confronted with extreme conditions of precarity, and their prospects of survival become further undermined, the imperative to understand the consequences of these new realities is a task that the IASFM is well-placed to address. In the 21st century, gender does not mean women, and panels are also asked to focus on the reconceptualization of gender dynamics and relations at times of crises. The category of unaccompanied minors has been replaced by that of separated children, who travel on their own continuing to escape protection instruments and disappearing on route. Panels are asked to consider these categories of minors and their well-being.

2. Changing durable solutions

The current proliferation of inter-state agreements, regional mechanisms and the reconfiguration of the role of the UN to manage movements across borders and protect refugees calls for an understanding of the emerging dynamics of institutional frameworks, renegotiations of modes of protection and a redefinition of what constitutes 'durable solutions'.

3. Civil society, new humanitarianism and citizens' mobilization

Classic forms of humanitarianism are becoming obsolete. New forms of citizen mobilization and engagement are emerging; roles are being reversed; the militarization and privatisation of aid are widespread; and we see the consolidation of refugee and migrants' led activism and citizens' solidarity with asylum seekers and refugees. Such

issues need to be addressed through dialogues among social actors working in different sectors.

4. Politics of representation and changing identities

The proliferation and widespread dissemination of images of refugees and migrants, of crises and new emergencies in media and especially social media, contribute to a restructuring of the political landscape, including the reconceptualization of the threatening refugee and Islamophobia, from refugee as resources to refugee entrepreneurs within a global neo-liberalism context, and powerless vulnerable victims in need of aid. Panels will address the politics of representation in historical, cultural, aesthetic perspectives.

5. Reflective praxis

In a world of the 'big data', this theme will revisit the ways in which information is being used by practitioners for promoting accurate information to refugees concerning 'Who is a refugee', how refugees themselves manage the increasing complex bureaucratic structures and information services around them and how to make a claim when they have no lawyer or assistance. It will examine the role of trainings, legal aid, and education provisions for refugees. We will also address the comparison between refugees and development induced forced displacement. To what extent are the experiences of these forced migrants and other 'internally displaced' populations similar or different from each other?

RULES OF PARTICIPATION

Conference participants may only make one paper presentation. In addition to a paper presentation, they may also play a second role: organise/chair a panel and/or roundtable or be a discussant on a panel or roundtable.

PAPER PANELS, FILMS, ART PROJECTS, COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH – PRACTITIONER PROJECTS

The Program Committee will give preference to panel proposals and other artistic interventions over individual papers. Panels organized on the basis of any of the proposed themes will ensure cohesive discussions throughout the conference. The Committee particularly encourages imaginative panels that incorporate comparative perspectives, cross-disciplinary boundaries, and engage debates between scholars and practitioners and when possible forced migrants. We will limit panels to a maximum of

two consecutive ninety-minute sessions, each of which can hold a maximum of four papers or other equivalent. Presentations should last between 15-20 minutes allowing for discussion and questions from the audience.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

The Program Committee encourages organization of roundtable discussions involving forced migration scholars, policy-makers, practitioners, and if possible refugees and forced migrants. Roundtables might also be a good venue for doctoral students and young migration scholars to exchange ideas about research ethics, methodological issues, peer review, etc. Roundtables organized by doctoral students might also involve editors or experts from whom the emerging scholars would like to learn. Roundtable discussions are limited to 90 minutes. There is no possibility of having a double roundtable session. The number of participants in a roundtable should not exceed six persons to allow for a robust discussion and questions from the audience.

As noted above, preference will be given to panel and roundtable proposals, but will consider individual papers provided that they correspond with one of the themes proposed above.

SUBMISSION OF PANEL, ROUNDTABLE, AND PAPER PROPOSALS

Submissions are now closed.

LANGUAGE

The official language of the IASFM is primarily English. However, provision for ad hoc translation will also be provided upon request (mainly for refugees).

Requests for further information may be addressed to Tanja Neskovic, email:

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Visit the IASFM17 website (<http://iasfm.org/iasfm17>) to keep up to date with news and developments!