



UNIVERSITÀ
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laboratorio di studi critici
sulle migrazioni forzate



VI Escapes Conference– #escapes2020

REAPPRAISING THE GOVERNANCE OF MIGRATION AND ASYLUM: RESISTANCE AND ACTION AT TIMES OF AMBIVALENCE AND UNCERTAINTIES

Milano, Università degli Studi, 25 e 26 Giugno 2020

The 2001 International Agenda for Migration Management as well as the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration adopted in 2018 by the majority of UN Member States in Marrakech have reaffirmed states' sovereign right to determine their own national migration policies in terms of admission, asylum, naturalization and expulsion, "in accordance with international law." Tensions between states' international obligations to respect the fundamental rights of persons (be they migrants or non-migrants) and their attempt to protect their sovereign preserve in the field of migration policies have been addressed by the scholarship across various disciplines.

Yet today, the oft-cited reference to "tensions" may not suffice to address the emergence of mechanisms, legal provisions and policy decisions aimed at deterring people from seeking safer harbour abroad and at delegitimizing their aspirations for decent living conditions. Nor is the reference to tensions between international law and states' sovereignty enough to analyse the widespread diffusion of ambivalent notions (e.g. "saving lives", "safe third country", "safe harbour", "controlled centres", "regional disembarkation platforms"), the banal acceptance of fuzzy political constructs (e.g. "safe return", "circularity", "mobility", "economic migrants", "voluntary vs. forced return") and the common use of atypical arrangements (e.g., exchanges of letters, memoranda of understanding, administrative arrangements, deals) having severe implications for human rights observance and protection. These developments have been conducive to the expansion of grey zones where distinctions between conventional categories and definitional limits have become gradually unclear. Today, they are also visible at local, national, regional and multilateral levels.

The 2020 Escapes conference is aimed at interrogating these unprecedented developments (*Why is it so and not otherwise?*), their attributes (*How have they been apparent?*) as well as their implications for migrants and citizens alike. Finally, shedding light on the existence of a grey zone, where euphemism, ambivalence, removal and violence converge, is a prerequisite to limiting its expansion and to defining alternative patterns of resistance and action.

The conference will be organized into 4 thematic strings.

Paper proposals should address one of these thematic strings and will be subsequently organized into consecutive series of panels:

1) Understanding the present. The origin of institutes, practices and dispositives.

- a) From securitisation to criminalisation
- b) Collaboration with ‘third-countries’; politics of control of the Eu external borders and border enforcement of the Eu internal borders; institutional definitions of safe countries (of origin and transit); readmissions, repatriations, deportations.
- c) Effectiveness or delegitimation of the right to asylum; institutional dispositives and informal practices for partitioning between asylum seekers and economic migrants; obstacles and limits of the rights to asylum; political agreements on relocation

2) Resistances, practices, actions

- a) perspectives on political actions and solidarity; activism; humanitarian reasons; volunteering and aid relationships
- b) forms of resistance and struggles carried on by asylum seekers and refugees (both on a social and on an individual level) in order to enact their migratory projects and their aspirations.
- c) public discourse, hegemonic discourse; institutional racism; new and old right movements; anti-migration movements; media discourse
- d) the role of arguments and of legal instruments in political paths and in migrants’ rights activism ; law as an instrument of political action from below

3) Looking at the “shadow zones”

- a) the governing of poverty; moral economies; financial-humanitarianism and data regulation
- b) Disciplining (through) the bodies; formal and informal practices of inclusion and containment; process of illegalization
- c) Documenting, analysing and dealing with forms of violence in forced migration; intersectional gender, sex, race, culture and class oppressions.

4) Refugee Hosting in Europe’s sovereignisms

- a) Relationships between hosting systems (in Italy and in other European countries), securitarian logics and logics of control; the impact of normative frames and reforms; experimentation of alternative hosting systems.

b) Transformations in the hosting practices; the role of **protecting institutions and workers under pressure, difficulties and attempts of social innovation**; personal and collective re-elaborations and lived experiences in hosting contexts

c) the impacts of the hosting mechanisms on the processes of inclusion and participation of refugees; longitudinal analysis of refugees' biographical paths (even through self- ethnography)

This call for paper is addressed to individual or collective contributions with a theoretical, empirical or narrative angle. Researchers, social workers, professionals, stakeholders, activists, institutions, NGOs, migrants and refugees' communities, artists, photographers and documentarists who would like to present their work as a scientific contribution, or as a visual narrative or in other forms, are encouraged to participate.

Proposals are welcome both in English and in Italian. The language to be used on each panel will be communicated later on, on the basis of the selected contributions. In order to submit a proposal for the conference, you need to send an abstract (no longer than 500 words), a short CV (5 sentences), affiliation, contact, address and the thematic panel stream. Every thematic panel stream will then organise the selected proposals in different consecutive panels. Abstracts should be sent by March 30, 2020, - in word or equivalent format - to migrazioniforzate@unimi.it , putting "SURNAME_stringa X" both in the subject line and in the filename.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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