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Migration and State Power





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**Edited by Frank Jacob**

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## **Global Humanities – Studies in Histories, Cultures, and Societies**

03/2016: Migration and State Power

Ed. by Frank Jacob

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## Editorial

Emigration is a form of suicide because it separates a person from all that life gives except the material wants of simple animal existence.<sup>1</sup>

People are moving all the time. Migration has always been a fundamental part of human history. However, the history of migration has peaks, and the world is currently experiencing one. Like in the Migration Period<sup>2</sup>, Europe is seeing major migration movements initiated by the events of the Arab Spring<sup>3</sup> and the reshaping of several countries in the MENA (Middle East North Africa) region. The downfall of former Western-backed regimes in Libya,<sup>4</sup> Tunisia,<sup>5</sup> and Egypt,<sup>6</sup> along with the Syrian Civil War, are the determining factors in the creation of refugee waves responsible for major demographic changes in the affected regions. The European nation states seem to be overwhelmed, in what is often called one of the major issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> However, it is not only logistics that are overstretched. There is a growing fear of hidden terrorists using the arriving refugee masses as cover, especially since the recent attacks in Paris.<sup>8</sup> Fear causes anger, and stereotypes seem to increase their negative impact, especially after disastrous experiences

1 *Allgemeine Zeitung* (Augsburg), 09.12.1816, cited in Marcus Lee Hansen: *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1806. A History of the Continuing Settlement of the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1940, p. 3.

2 For a survey of the Migration Period, see Guy Halsall: *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376–568*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2008; Walter Pohl: *Die Völkerwanderung*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 2005.

3 For a survey on these consequences, see Paul Danahar: *The New Middle East: The World After the Arab Spring*. London: Bloomsbury 2015.

4 Vijay Prashad: *Arab Spring, Libyan Winter*. Edinburgh: AK 2012.

5 Michael Willis: *Politics and Power in the Maghreb. Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring*. New York: Oxford UP 2014.

6 Rabab El-Mahdi / Bahgat Korany (eds): *Arab Spring in Egypt. Revolution and Beyond*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press 2014.

7 Andrew Geddes: *Immigration and European Integration: Towards Fortress Europe*. Manchester: Manchester UP 2008, already discussed the role and possible problems of immigration in the EU some years before.

8 Russel Berman: Can Terrorists Really Infiltrate the Syrian Refugee Program? In: *The Atlantic*, 18.11.2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/11/can-terrorists-really-infiltrate-the-syrian-refugee-program/416475/> (accessed 20.11.2015).

with refugees like the sexual assaults against women in Cologne.<sup>9</sup> Anger on both sides seems the natural consequence. The populations of Europe are frightened by the unknown, persuaded by stereotypes, and sometimes badly advised by their own politicians and those who would use the crisis in service of a demagogic crusade that solely strengthens the demagogues themselves. Meanwhile, refugees, especially when treated inappropriately, develop a high potential for anger and radicalism. Accusations, such as those directed against the Syrian refugees, will not solve the problem, but rather intensify the gap between those in need and those in a position to help.<sup>10</sup>

The Italian island of Lampedusa is probably the most well-known point for refugees arriving on European soil<sup>11</sup>, but Malta<sup>12</sup> and recently Turkey are also seeing growing numbers of refugees. On Malta, most of the West Africans who arrive “lack social and legal rights, and as rejected asylum seekers they are deportable, and often subjected to racism, discrimination, and structural exclusion.”<sup>13</sup> In Turkey, the situations of many Syrian refugees seem hopeless too, especially since the industrial nation states of the European Union are currently trying everything to prevent a further increase of immigration. Like with the Syrian Civil War or poverty-stricken regions in Africa, the former cases of “Bosnia, Somalia, Myanmar, Haiti demonstrate, the international community is unable and/or unwilling to intervene effectively to bring severe conflicts under control and to establish permanent solutions.”<sup>14</sup>

The situation will not be resolved by chastising other European countries for their unwillingness to accept more refugees.<sup>15</sup> Neither will thresholds and

9 Germans Protest Over Wave of Sexual Assaults on Women in Cologne. In: *The Telegraph*, 06.01.2016. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/germany/12084076/Germans-protest-over-wave-of-sexual-assaults-on-women-in-Cologne.html> (accessed 10.01.2016).

10 Jon Stone: Syrian Refugees Should be Trained into an Army to Fight Isis, Poland's Foreign Minister Says. In: *The Independent*, 16.11.2015. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/syrian-refugees-should-be-trained-into-an-army-to-fight-isis-polands-foreign-minister-says-a6736776.html> (accessed 20.11.2015).

11 On the history of the island: Ulrich Ladurner: *Lampedusa*. St. Pölten / Salzburg / Wien: Residenz 2014.

12 Agnethe Overgaard: Four Days, Eighteen Months, and Five Years. West African Migrants Crossing the Border between Libya and Malta. In: *Etnofoor* 26,1 (2014), pp. 39–58.

13 Ibid., p. 39.

14 J. Craig Jenkins / Susanne Schmeidl: Flight From Violence. The Origins and Implications of the World Refugee Crisis. In: *Sociological Focus* 28,1 (1995), pp. 63–82, here p. 63.

15 Gerd Appenzeller: In der EU macht nehmen einfach mehr Spaß als geben. In: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 30.10.2015. <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/verteilung-der-fluechtlinge-in-der-eu-macht-nehmen-einfach-mehr-spass-als-geben/12523076.html> (accessed 10.01.2016).

quotas solve the problem.<sup>16</sup> The ongoing discussions remind the historian of the Conference of Evian in 1938, due to which the world discussed the future of Jewish emigration from Nazi Germany.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately the world stood back and prevaricated, instead of solving the issue by helping those in need.<sup>18</sup> Recalling these events, it is shocking how little circumstances have changed for those in need in the last seven decades. Twenty years ago, J. Craig Jenkins and Susanne Schmeidl already described the need for effective international intervention:

Not only are international organizations such as the UN and various international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) central to humanitarian assistance but also permanent solutions to the conflicts creating the refugee problem depend on international intervention, including both conflict resolution and protection for basic human rights.<sup>19</sup>

In a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, Alexander Betts, Professor of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, and Paul Collier, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, both at the University of Oxford, explained in detail that refugees can also provide opportunities to the countries currently hosting them. They emphasized that “[t]he need for a fresh approach to the crisis is obvious.”<sup>20</sup> For both authors, a viable solution in the form of a long-term approach seems simple:

If disempowered Syrians can access employment and educational opportunities in exile, they will be more likely to return to their country equipped to contribute to its postconflict recovery. And they will be less likely to fall victim to the lure of militant organizations that recruit from among the disempowered. By building legitimate sources of opportunity, then, a development-based approach to the refugees in Jordan could help pave the way for a more stable postwar Syria.<sup>21</sup>

16 Seehofer fordert Obergrenze von “maximal 200.000 Flüchtlingen” pro Jahr. In: *Focus*, 03.01.2016. [http://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/diese-zahl-ist-verkraftbar-seehofer-fordert-obergrenze-von-maximal-200-000-fluechtlingen-pro-jahr\\_id\\_5186020.html](http://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/diese-zahl-ist-verkraftbar-seehofer-fordert-obergrenze-von-maximal-200-000-fluechtlingen-pro-jahr_id_5186020.html) (accessed 10.01.2016).

17 On this issue: Ralph Weingarten: *Die Hilfeleistung der westlichen Welt bei der Endlösung der deutschen Judenfrage. Das Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees (IGC) 1938–1939*. Bern: Lang 1983.

18 For a discussion of the world’s passive stand during the destruction of the European Jews, see Frank Jacob: When the World Stood Aside – The Allied Reaction to Jan Karski’s Report from Hell. *Publications and Research*. Paper 12 (2015) [http://academicworks.cuny.edu/qb\\_pubs/12](http://academicworks.cuny.edu/qb_pubs/12) (accessed 10.01.2016).

19 Jenkins / Schmeidl: Flight, p. 64.

20 Alexander Betts / Paul Collier: Help Refugees Help Themselves: Let Displayed Syrians Join the Labor Market. In: *Foreign Affairs* 94,6 (2015), pp. 84–92, here p. 85.

21 Ibid., p. 89.

One thing is definitely obvious: the problem can no longer be ignored. We might not like the times we live in, but they are ours and the refugee crisis will be a major part of them. However, migration and refugee crises are not totally new phenomena; they are well known from a historical perspective. In the United States between 1890 and 1920, almost 15% of the population were immigrants<sup>22</sup> and its history – despite the demagogic crusade against immigration by Donald Trump<sup>23</sup> – shows how immigration can positively affect a country. Revolutions, such as the French Revolution in 1789 or the Russian Revolution in 1917, have also created an almost countless number of refugees.<sup>24</sup> Even the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the 1940s saw between 40 and 75 million displaced people forced to escape wars, civil wars, genocides, famines, and other crises.<sup>25</sup>

Africa in particular has been struck by economic crises, regional conflicts, and guerrilla wars since its decolonization.<sup>26</sup> Internal wars shattered Angola, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Africa, the Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.<sup>27</sup> Conflicts like the Ogaden War<sup>28</sup> in the late 1970s also caused refugees to leave their homes, and other countries needed a strategy to deal with the large numbers of displaced people. In the case of the Ogaden War, Somalia, with a population of 3.5 million inhabitants, had to prepare shelter for more than a million refugees.<sup>29</sup> The end of the Vietnam War also forced

22 Alfred C. Aman, Jr.: Introduction. Migration and Globalization. In: *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 2,1 (1994), pp. 1–4, here p. 2.

23 Dolia Estevez: Debunking Donald Trump's Five Extreme Statements about Immigrants and Mexico. In: *Forbes*, 03.09.2015. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/doliaestevez/2015/09/03/debunking-donald-trumps-five-extreme-statements-about-immigrants-and-mexico/#2715e4857a0b6ff9762d7076> (accessed 10.01.2016).

24 Frank Jacob: Revolution, Emigration, and Anger – Angry Exile Groups in the Aftermath of the French and Russian Revolutions. In: Susan C. Cloninger / Steven Leibo (eds): *Angry Groups and Politics: How They Change Society, and How We Can Affect Their Behavior*. Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio 2018 (forthcoming).

25 Harbo Hakovirta: *Third World Conflicts and Refugeeism. Dimensions, Dynamics, and Trends of the World Refugee Problem*. Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters 1986, pp. 32–34.

26 For some basic surveys, see Aderanti Adepoju: The Dimension of the Refugee Problem in Africa. In: *African Affairs* 81,322 (1982), pp. 21–35; Jake C. Miller: The Homeless of Africa. In: *Africa Today* 29,2 (1982), pp. 5–30.

27 Constance G. Anthony: Africa's Refugee Crisis: State Building in Historical Perspective. In: *The International Migration Review* 25,3 (1991), pp. 574–591, here p. 575.

28 On the Ogaden War see: Jeffrey Shaw: The Ogaden War. A Case Study of Cold War Politics. In: Frank Jacob (ed.): *Peripheries of the Cold War*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2015, pp. 101–113.

29 Ioan M. Lewis: The Somali Refugee Crisis. In: *RAIN* 39 (1980), pp. 2–3, here p. 2.

countless people to leave their homes and, like today, “the refugees have saddled neighboring [...] nations with serious political, economic, social and security problems.”<sup>30</sup> While the European Union is discussing the “burden” created by the arriving refugees, Lebanon, with a population of just four million, is currently hosting over one million Syrians.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the role of discussions among Europe’s politicians and citizens, an important factor in the success or failure of a future refugee policy is the position of state power. Migration can certainly be caused by environmental factors<sup>32</sup>; however, only political measures can influence the rules migration must follow. Despite the active role of state power, the interaction is not one-sided, since increasing migration can also change the role of and belief in the state: “migration has become a social force which by its very existence challenges the organization of control and power.”<sup>33</sup> It also challenges the nation state itself. While “globalization takes hold in some domains, nation-states resist it in others, notably in the control of migration”<sup>34</sup> when they try to control the conditions of the migration process.<sup>35</sup>

In contrast to emigration, which is usually connected to a fear of loss by the nation state,<sup>36</sup>

migrants are considered as irregular citizens they are commonly conceived either as criminals or as being forced to move, not as active creators of the realities they find themselves in or of the realities they create when they move. The category of the illegal migrant is not created, primarily, by a legal context, but by the political and theoretical view in which forms of agency are driven by internal necessities; the legal context only follows to consolidate this perspective and standardise the ‘migrants’ into manageable categories.<sup>37</sup>

30 Barry Wain: The Indochina Refugee Crisis. In: *Foreign Affairs* 58,1 (1979), pp. 160–180, here p. 160.

31 Betts / Collier: Help, p. 84. For the impact of the Syrian Civil War on the Lebanon, see Javier Lion Bustillo: Libano y Siria. Entre la disociación y el desbordamiento / Lebanon and Syria. Between Dissociation and Spillover. In: *Rivista CIDOB d’Afers Internacionals* 108 (2014), pp. 213–235, here pp. 218–225.

32 Suman Bisht / Giovanna Gioli / Talimand Khan / Jürgen Scheffran: Migration as an Adaptation Strategy and its Gendered Implications: A Case Study From the Upper Indus Basin. In: *Mountain Research and Development* 34,3 (2014), pp. 255–265, here p. 255.

33 Dimitris Papadopoulos / Vassilis S. Tsianos: Crisis, Migration and the Death Drive of Capitalism. In: *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 31 (2012), pp. 4–11, here pp. 5–6.

34 Aman: Introduction, p. 1.

35 Papadopoulos / Tsianos: Crisis, p. 7.

36 Nancy L. Green: The Politics of Exit. Reversing the Immigration Paradigm. In: *The Journal of Modern History* 77,2 (2005), pp. 263–289, here p. 266.

37 Papadopoulos / Tsianos: Crisis, p. 9.

It is ironic that some states try to prohibit their citizens from leaving<sup>38</sup> while the industrial European states in particular fear immigration and its consequences. Whatever the result of the debate, migration will remain a fundamental part of world history. What can be changed, however, is the way we address refugee crises in future. People who have lost everything else should at least be allowed to keep their dignity. In addition, a positive reminder of their foreign experience might also lead to a collaborative future when the refugees have returned to their home countries after war is eliminated in these spheres.

### *The Contributions*

Since migration is a historical phenomenon, it is no surprise that the current issue of *Global Humanities* has a strong historical focus. In the opening chapter, Verena Risse explains the relationship between migrants and the state from a philosophical perspective. After this theoretical introduction, Matthew Douglas explains the interrelationship between the Huguenot emigrant community and the French state to show how such communities develop their own historicity and symbolism. In the next chapter, Scott Craig focuses on the trinity of punishment, forced migration, and political power in the Atlantic world in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The global perspective is also provided in the following four chapters by Olga Kachina, Ashley Zampogna-Krug, Frank Jacob, and Ann-Judith Rabenschlag, who analyze the relationship between migration and state power in the case of White Russian refugees after the revolution of 1917, emigration from Fascist Italy, settler colonialism in East Asia after 1945, and the anti-racism issue in the German Democratic Republic. The volume is rounded out by Nicole Beth Wallenbrock's study of "Clandestine Boat Immigration in French Film." This perspective is especially important since it provides an example of how the image of refugees is spread by popular media. All of the contributions show that migration cannot be discussed without discussing the state and its position towards migrants.

38 Myron Weiner: *The Global Migration Crisis. Challenge to States and to Human Rights*. New York: Harper Collins 1995, pp. 29–44.