

CALL FOR PAPERS
International Conference
“Migration Management” and International Organizations in the 20th Century
April 23-25 2015, Athens, Greece "Leonidas Zervas"
Amphitheatre of the National Hellenic Research Foundation
48, Vassileos Constantinou Avenue

The Conference is organized as part of the research project Migration Management and International Organizations: A history of the establishment of the International Organization for Migration in the context of the Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning” (Action “ARISTEIA”). Both the Conference and the Project are co-financed by the European Union (European Social Fund) and national funds.

Events in the early 21st century have brought to bear that addressing migration and refugee issues in isolation is not particularly effective. As such, states have been increasingly working together to regulate population movements and refugee relief through regional and global negotiations and coordination. Optimal effectiveness in “migration management”, it is claimed, involves inter-state cooperation as well as collaboration with non-state agencies.

On the European continent, in 2005, the EU adopted a “Global approach to migration” recognizing “the need for a common, global immigration policy” and noting that “managing migration requires dialogue and close cooperation with third countries”. At the global level, the first decade of the 21st century, saw international organizations, such as the IOM and the UN, undertaking the task of providing a framework for the formulation of coherent, comprehensive and global responses to migration issues.

Despite the dominance of this term, there has been little insight into understanding: how this notion became the conventional wisdom in migration rhetoric and contemporary debates; what this notion actually refers to, or how it has changed over time, and, particularly so in the context of market liberalization. We challenge the taken-for-granted notions of “migration management” by questioning how the term was employed, if at all, in the pre-1990s and, as a corollary, we scrutinize the history of the policies underlying it.

It is well documented that many modern Western states developed, albeit in an uneven manner, systematic policies to control borders and to steer population movements in the 19th century. More importantly, attempts to establish international agencies accorded with the task of regulating economic and forced migration go back to the end of World War I with the creation of the International Labour Organization and the Commission for Refugees of the League of Nations. However, while there is a vast literature on international organizations’ strategies for the administration and resettlement of refugees after the two World Wars, scholarship on international attempts at regulating and/or managing economic migration is still scarce. Research up to now has focused mainly on the International Labour Organization’s efforts to establish legal regulations concerning migrant worker’s rights during the Inter-War period and on inter-state migration agreements. Notably, considered research into the more than 60 year history of the International Organization for Migration, has been at best partial, despite the Organization’s global visibility. This neglect is surprising given that the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (the International Organization for Migration’s predecessor) arranged transport for nearly a million migrants and came to “manage the promotion, recruitment, and selection of migrants” as early as the 1950s¹. The Conference aims to contribute to a better understanding of historical developments and current trends and perceptions of “migration management” with a focus on the role of international organizations in steering economic and forced migration. Moreover, it seeks to jointly interrogate past international regulation efforts of both economic and forced migration. This International

Interdisciplinary Conference will thus address the following two interrelated issues:

- i. The emergence and evolution of concepts of “migration management” and the history of the policies, practices and discourses underlying them.

- ii. The history of international organizations accorded with the task of regulating economic and forced migration during the 20th century.

<https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/about-iom-1/history.html>

In this context, we especially welcome papers that focus on: The emergence and evolution of concepts of “migration management”:

- Conceptions of migration regulation; the discursive frameworks that have given meaning to the regulation of migration; the emergence of discourses on planning, coordination and scientific expertise and on turning population flows into an orderly, predictable and manageable process; processes of knowledge creation and category construction needed to steer international efforts in the field of migration.

- The complex interweaving of perceptions of labour demands, questions on population, narratives on development, modernization and technical expertise, humanitarian, political and security concerns; and following on from this, we invite papers that consider these issues in light of the emergence and evolution of concepts and mechanisms informing the international regulation of economic and forced migration.

- The interplay of discourses on universalism, nation-state-building, colonialism and decolonization with the international administration of circulating labour and mass displacement. International Organizations and the Creation and Diffusion of Data, Narratives and Policy Agendas on Economic and Forced migration:

- International organizations, experts and processes of data-generation: determining demographic and migration trends, labour supply and market demand. The role of such data and its analysis in shaping government decisions on economic and forced migration issues; the re-appropriation of international organizations’ knowledge and practices by their national or local missions and/or local actors.

- The international processes of choice of terms, concepts and perceptions used to interpret and address migration and refugee flows; the construction of categories such as nationals/citizens/aliens, DPs/refugees/migrants, legal/illegal movements and their changing meanings; international organizations’ eligibility criteria for assistance in migration or for refugee relief; policies of inclusion/exclusion.

- The role of international organizations in: the diffusion of concepts, categorizations and perceptions on migrants and refugees; establishing the significance of migration issues; setting the policy agenda on economic and forced migration worldwide; forming links between migration, human rights, race and gender discourses; forging a relationship with the mass media and the public sphere.

- The West’s hegemony in international organizations responsible for regulating economic and forced migration: the use of the term “international” to gain legitimacy and authority; discourses of universal human rights and humanitarian networks and practices and their impact on migrants’ lives; the use of these discourses in discrediting colonial perceptions of the West’s “civilizing mission” and racial discrimination; pressures exerted by non-Western states/actors on the formulation of concepts, narratives and regimes in the field of governing mobility and relief; and following on from this, the outcomes of their actions. International Organizations and the Regulation of Economic and Forced Migration. Practices, Implementations, Power Asymmetries:

- The emergence and expansion of legal regulations and international law instruments, state and international interventions; international administrative practices and standards.

- The impetus for the foundation and development of specific international organizations for the

regulation of economic and forced migration and refugee relief; the complex interplay between the strategies, interests and the asymmetrical bargaining power of the various actors involved in the establishment and functioning of international organizations; their practices, projects, endeavours and failures; their funding; their growth in terms of budget and scope of activities; their staff profile.

- International organizations and “migration management” within/through the lens of the Cold War, including movement and settlement of people as an instrument of/for political antagonisms. - Competition between international organizations specialized in regulating economic and forced migration for mandates, resources and legitimacy.

- The extension of international organizations’ mandate to non-Western areas; the shift of focus from East-West to North-South dichotomy; Western and Non- Western actors’ interventions.

- The emergence and growth of commercially driven interests in the international “management” of migration and the links between state based and market driven stakeholders.

Researchers interested in participating in the Conference are requested to send their proposals to Dimitris Parsanoglou parsanoglou@hotmail.com. Proposals should be approximately 400 words in length.

If selected, entry to and participation in the conference is free of charge. The conference gathering will include morning and afternoon tea.

The deadline for submitting proposals is September 15 2014. Notification for approved submission by November 30 2014.

At the conclusion of the conference we will provide you with potential publication details for selected conference papers. Further details to follow.

Scientific Committee

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