

Call for Workshop Papers

Forced migration and refugee studies in the East.

Is there a need for acknowledging the Global East as yet another epistemic concept?

Thinking about the world in a simple binary of the Global North and the Global South epistemologically disregards the experiences of the post-Soviet countries and generally the regions in the Global East (Müller 2020). Equally, some post-colonial thinking tends to struggle with the subaltern imperial position of Russia and other countries towards the West who are colonial powers in the region but subaltern to the North (Morozov 2013) or the dual subaltern position of countries such as Ukraine or Georgia vis a vis the North *and* Russia (Chernetsky 2003) or of subaltern powers such as Russia which may be inferior to the West but still superior to other countries in their vicinity. The epistemic concept of the Global East does thus not imply any homogeneity but rather facilitates studying its great diversity as well as the regional power relations of the coloniser and the colonised. However, the East “is outside the circuits and conduits of Western knowledge architecture” (Müller 2020). As a consequence, much migration, forced migration and refugee research too has been focussing on the Global South and power relations vis a vis the North; meanwhile, matters in the East have been understudied and what there is, is often policy driven and determined by the interests of international organisations favouring some and ignoring other issues. In the North little attention has been raised by displacement in Central Asia, post-colonial attitudes towards Central Asian Migrants in Russia (Kuznetsova and Round 2019), conflict in Tajikistan, refugees in Kazakhstan, Afghans in Uzbekistan, IDPs in Ukraine since 2014, the arrival of Belarusian and Russian dissidents in Ukraine prior 2022, not to forget the wars in Chechnya, Georgia and Moldova, and displacement due to the 2021 war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Only the journeys of refugees through Belarus to the EU from 2021, just as of transit migrants through Ukraine in the 2000s, began to change this, but only because it affected the EU. But it is the Russian invasion of Ukraine that revealed how little is known about these countries and urgently puts the region back on the map of research needs.

The purpose of this workshop is thus threefold: (a) to sketch the state-of-the-art of forced migration research on the countries east of the EU, (b) to discuss the utility of the concept of the Global East not so much as a region but as an “epistemic concept” (Müller 2020) and (c) to consider how to facilitate and expand research collaboration and research. Contributors will be identified by invitation and this CFP.

We invite papers offering an overview, comparisons or a wider perspective on migration, forced migration and refugee studies in the Global East, tentatively the countries East of the EU, north of the Himalaya and West of China, though reflections on Polish or Lithuanian imperial or other legacies would be welcomed, too. These may be theoretical papers and literature surveys though case studies may also be included. Presentations may be based on short discussion papers, full drafts or already published articles. Although Ukraine is a key concern it will not be the main focus of this event as we aim to take a broader look.

Please submit an **abstract of around 300 words** and a **short bio** to: ffvt@uos.de. For questions feel free to contact franck.duvell@uos.de.



We aim for a **hybrid two-day international workshop on 17-18 October 2022 at IMIS, Osnabrück, Germany**, within limits all travel and accommodation costs will be covered.

Deadline for proposal: 5 September, notification shortly afterwards.

The workshop will be organised within the context of the FFVT project "Forced Migration and Refugee Studies: Networking and Knowledge Transfer".

About FFVT: The cooperation project "Forced Migration and Refugee Studies: Networking and Knowledge Transfer" (FFVT) is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). It aims to strengthen interdisciplinary forced migration and refugee research in Germany. To this end, the project brings together research on migration, development, conflict and violence, climate change, health, governance and human rights and other topics. FFVT supports the networking of researchers and institutes working in all relevant research fields dealing with forced migration. Furthermore, FFVT seeks to promote the internationalisation of German research activities.

FFVT is jointly run by the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), the Centre for Human Rights Erlangen-Nürnberg (CHREN, University of Erlangen Nuremberg), German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS, Bonn) and the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS), Osnabrück University.

Information and Contact: <https://ffvt.net/en>

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