

Between Institutional Resilience to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Resilience of Syrian Refugees

March 7–8 2019 | Research Centres Meeting Suites | Pankhurst House | LSE

In light of the protracted condition of Syrian refugees, the term ‘resilience’ has been mainly used in reference to the humanitarian response to the refugee crisis, as well host-countries’ development efforts to tackle it. However, there is no consensus on what ‘resilience’ means, neither on ways it can be put into practice. This conference aims to go beyond criticisms of ‘resilience’, which is seen as a by-product of neoliberalism, and instead focuses on the diversity from which it is conceptualised and enacted by different actors. The conference brings together practitioners and scholars to share their experiences and exchange research results on ‘resilience’ in the context of the refugee crisis. The conference also provides a platform for researchers to discuss the methodological and ethical aspects of researching Syrian refugees’ resilience and agency, in order to enhance the role of research as a catalyst for change in the context of refugeehood, displacement and migration.

Programme

March 7

14.30–15.00 Registration

15.00–16.15 Panel 1– Key Institutional Actors and their Approaches to Resilience

Chair: Michael Mason, Director, LSE Middle East Centre

Durable Solutions for Refugees: Trends in the Humanitarian Community Approach and Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis
Stefano Severe, UNHCR, Jordan

The Limitation of the Jordanian Government’s Resilience Approach to Syrian Refugee Crisis
Feda Gharaibeh, Director of Humanitarian Relief Coordination Unit, Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation, Jordan

Shifting Trends in the International Community Approach to Resilience in Post-Syrian Refugee Crisis
Anders Pedersen, UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator, Jordan

The Role of Local Government in Building the Resilience of Syrian Refugees: The Case of the Gaziantep Municipality
Önder Yalçın, Head of Migration Office, Gaziantep Municipality, Turkey

Discussion

16.15–16.30 Coffee Break

16.30–18.00 Panel 2– Critical Views to Resilience approaches

Chair: Romola Sanyal, Assistant Professor of Urban Geography, Department of Geography and Environment, LSE

The Question of Resilience in “Permanent Temporariness”: A Critical Debate on the Case of Syrian Refugees

Ahmet İçduygu, Director of MIREKOC, Koç University, Turkey

Contested Meanings of Resilience Building: The Case of Lebanon and the European Union

Tamirace Fakhoury, Associate Professor, Department of Social Sciences, Lebanese American University

Gender, Resilience, and Syrian Refugees in the Jordanian Labour Market

Lewis Turner, Senior Researcher, Arnold Bergstraesser Institute, Germany

The Role of Civil Society in Building Resilience among Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Opportunities and Challenges

Rouba Mhaissen, Director, Sawa Foundation, UK Sawa for Development and Aid, Lebanon

Discussion

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9.00–9.30 Registration

9.30–11.00 Panel 3– Ethnographic Exploration of the Resilience and Agency of Syrian Refugees

Chair: Filippo Dionigi, University of Bristol

Between Vulnerability and Resilience: Refugeeess as an Ambivalent Political Subjectivity

Jouni Häkli, Professor of Regional Studies, University of Tampere, Finland

Resilience and Rebuilding: Agency of Pious Refugee Women and Future of Syria

Umut Ozkaleli, Assistant Professor, Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

Gendering the Triangular Relationship between Vulnerability, Resilience, and Resistance: The Experiences of Displaced Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Aitemad Muhanna, Assistant Professorial Research Fellow, LSE Middle East Centre

The Role of Shared Social Identity in Mutual Support Among Refugees of Conflict: An Ethnographic Study of Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Khalifah Alfadhli, Assistant Professor, King Saud University

Discussion

11.00–11.15 Coffee Break

11.15–12.30 Panel 4– Methodological and Ethical Considerations of Researching Syrian Refugees

Chair: Ruba Salih, Reader in Gender Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies

The Importance of Relationality and Intersectionality in Refugee-related Research

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Professor of Migration and Refugee Studies, University College London

Why Ethnographic Research is Important for Researching Refugees

Sarah Tobin, Senior Researcher, CMI Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway

Decolonising Methodology; Researching Gender and Sexuality among Syrian Refugee Populations

Nof Nasser-Eddin, Director of Centre for Transnational Development and Collaboration, United Kingdom

Discussion

12.30–13.30 Lunch

13.30–15.30 Panel 5– Reflections from the Field

Chair: Annelies Moors, Professor of Anthropology, Amsterdam University

The Limitation of Professional Codes of Research Ethics in Researching Syrian Refugees:

Experiences from the field research presented and discussed by a group of ethnographic and qualitative researchers: Umut Ozkaleli, Rouba Mhaissen, Tamirace Fakhoury, Kirsi Pauliina Kallio and Aitemad Muhanna

Speaker Biographies

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Stefano Severe's career in the humanitarian field spans over 36 years, the last 24 with UNHCR. Prior to joining UNHCR, Mr. Severe spent over a decade working in Switzerland, Thailand, Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, the Netherlands and the United States of America before joining UNHCR in 1992 as Head of Sub Office in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. Mr. Severe is currently UNHCR Representative to Jordan, a position he has held since October 2016.

Feda Gharaibeh is the Director of the Humanitarian Relief Cooperation Unit at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan. She was in charge of the Iraqi file after the Gulf War in 2003, and then was mandated to follow up the Syria Crises file and the relevant issues i.e. international support to refugees and host communities impacted by the crisis, as well as the planning process (i.e. the Jordan Response Plan) by linking humanitarian needs with resilience (Resilience Based approach).

Anders Pedersen is the current UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan. Prior to this, he was UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for Botswana. Anders has served with the UN as Coordinator of the Europe, North America and Central Asia Unit in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, and served as Chief at the UN Human Rights Office in Angola. Prior to that Anders worked in the Swedish Foreign Service, was Human Rights Legal Adviser to the UN Mission in El Salvador, and Associate Protection Officer at UNHCR in El Salvador and Honduras.

Önder Yalçın is currently Head of Migration Office at Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality. He was previously founder and coordinator of the Social Research Center at the Municipality. Mr. Yalçın received his Bachelor Degree in Social Work at Hacettepe University, Ankara. He received a Master's in Political Science and International Relations at Hasan Kalyoncu University, Gaziantep.

Ahmet İçduygu holds a dual appointment as Professor at Koç University, in the Department of International Relations and the Department of Sociology. He is Director at the Migration Research Center at Koc and conducted various research projects for international organizations such as IOM, UNHCR, EU, OECD and ILO. He teaches on migration studies, theories and practices of citizenship, international organizations, civil society, nationalism and ethnicity, and research methods.

Tamirace Fakhoury is Associate Professor of political science at the Lebanese American University (LAU), and Director at the Institute for Social Justice and Conflict Resolution (ISJCR). Her core research focuses on power sharing in divided societies, Euro-Mediterranean migration dynamics and governance, refugee politics in the Middle East, EU foreign policy in the Middle East, and the role of diasporas in political transformations.

Lewis Turner is a Senior Researcher at the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute in Freiburg, Germany. His research focuses on the humanitarian response for Syrian refugees in Jordan, especially questions of gender (particularly men and masculinities), race, work, labour markets and encampment.

Rouba Mhaissen is the Founder and Director of Sawa for Development and Aid, a civil society organisation that supports Syrian refugees in Lebanon and IPDs in Syria, and Sawa Foundation UK that supports forced migrants in Europe and the Middle East. She is currently a Lecturer in Development at the AUB. Rouba is the recipient of many awards, including Queen Elizabeth Award (2011), the FCO Marsh Award for Peacemaking and Peacekeeping (2016), and the Forbes 30Under30 for Policy and Law (2017).

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Jouni Häkli is Professor of Regional Studies and directs the Space and Political Agency Research Group in Tampere University, as part of the Academy of Finland's Centres of Excellence. His research

lies at the intersection of political geography and global and transnational studies, with focus on political subjectivity and agency, forced migration and transnationalisation.

Umut Ozkaleli's field work in Turkey focused on different women identities and their relationship with the Turkish state. She used intersectionality as a framework to suggest a need for a different approach called Equity Organizing for culturally diverse and authoritarian leaning states. Her latest work is on Syrian refugees who were living in Gaziantep, Turkey during 2015 and 2016. It focuses on the transborder re-making of social interactions, the everyday becoming of refugees, and their articulations of agency in the host country.

Aitemad Muhanna-Matar is an Assistant Professorial Research Fellow at the LSE's Middle East Centre. She currently works on a research project investigating the gender-based resilience mechanisms used by displaced Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey. In 2010-2013, she was Senior Researcher for a project on Gendering Faith in the Arab region. In the period 1996 to 2008, Dr Muhanna worked as a gender and social development consultant for the World Bank, UNDP, Oxfam-GB, Care International and Save the Children, based in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

Khalifah Alfadhli is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at King Saud University, Riyadh. He holds a PhD in psychology from the University of Sussex, and focuses on the role of shared identity in mutual support among refugees of conflict in developing countries.

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's research focuses on the intersections between gender, generation and religion in experiences of and responses to conflict-induced displacement, with a particular regional focus on the Middle East. She is the Co-Director of UCL's Migration Research Unit and is currently the PI of three multi-year research projects, including a 4-year AHRC-ESRC funded project, 'Local Community Experiences of and Responses to Displacement from Syria'.

Sarah Tobin is Senior Researcher at Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, Norway. Dr Tobin's work explores transformations in religious and economic life, identity construction, and personal piety at the intersections of gender, Islamic authority, and public ethics. Her latest research is "TRAFIG - Transnational Figurations of Displacement: Connectivity and Mobility as Solutions to Protracted Refugee Situations", an EU-Funded Horizon 2020 grant, where she will lead the research on Syrian refugees.

Nof Nasser-Eddin is co-founder and co-director of the Centre for Transnational Development and Collaboration (CTDC). Nof is a queer Palestinian feminist sociologist, who was awarded a PhD in Sociology in 2011 from the University of Warwick. Nof's research interests also include queer feminist methodologies, femininities, decoloniality, and sexual practices and gender performances.

Kirsi Pauliina Kallio works as Professor of Regional Studies at Tampere University, Finland. She develops her research as part of the Academy of Finland's Centres of Excellence in Research on the Relational and Territorial Politics of Bordering, Identities and Transnationalization, in the Space and Political Agency Research Group. Her current research focuses on the relational spatiality of the humanitarian border, which she approaches from the perspective of experienced refugeehood.