**WORKSHOP**

**CRITICAL APPROACHES TO IRREGULAR MIGRATION FACILITATION: DISMANTLING THE HUMAN SMUGGLER NARRATIVE**

Scientific Organisers:
Luigi Achilli | Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute
Gabriella E. Sanchez | National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas at El Paso

Conference Room

Villa La Fonte, Via delle Fontanelle, 18 - San Domenico di Fiesole

5-6 APRIL 2016

**INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary mainstream narratives on migration, the human smuggler has earned a privileged if infamous spot as one of the most widely recognised and despised global predators. Smugglers are often referred to as orchestrators of senseless human tragedies along migration corridors, masterminds behind sexual exploitation rings, or amassers of untold riches made at the expense of asylum seekers, migrants and their families – in turn, often narrowly portrayed as infantile and ignorant. Perceived as racialised, hypersexual and greedy *males* from the global South, these facilitators of irregular migration have earned widespread notoriety in narratives on human and national security, particularly in the context of migration control efforts.

Media and authorities conceive the fight against clandestine migration as a war, a war where the evil is represented by the smuggler. The question is: is this a worthy war? Human smugglers certainly bear responsibility for many of the tragedies we are currently witnessing in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. However, our knowledge of irregular migration facilitation is often plagued with fragmented perspectives on the socio-cultural dynamics of the migratory journey, the facilitator-traveller relationship and their community dimensions. This is hardly surprising. Scholarship on the facilitation of irregular migration often draws exclusively from the experiences of government or law enforcement entities, or of the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who were the unfortunate target of threats, scams or violence during their clandestine journeys, further obscuring the perspectives of those playing a role in their transits.

In light of the need to develop an adequate policy response to human smuggling, a better understanding of the phenomenon is pivotal in ensuring the stability of the receiving state and the security of the migrant/refugee. With this task in mind, this workshop aims to problematise the figure
of the smugglers beyond overly simplistic generalisations and representations. There is a growing
corpus of empirical and critical work on the facilitation or brokerage of irregular migration within
migration regimes, which deserves to be fostered and strengthened. We are proposing critical and
empirical engagements on the topic of the facilitation and brokerage of irregular migration as
witnessed regionally and comparatively.

The workshop is co-organised by the Migration Policy Centre of the European University Institute,
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, and the National Security Studies Institute of the
University of Texas at El Paso.
PROGRAMME

5 APRIL

09.00-09.15 Opening
Luigi Achilli | Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute
Gabriella E. Sanchez | National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas at El Paso

09.15-09.30 Official welcome
Philippe Fargues | Director of the Migration Policy Centre

09.30-10.15 Introduction - Towards new notions in human smuggling and brokerage studies
Sheldon Zhang | San Diego State University

10.15-10.30 Coffee break

10.30-12.30 Session 1 - Human smuggling theory and legislation
Chair: Ferruccio Pastore | International and European Forum on Migration Research (FIERI)

Problem or Solution: Migrants, states and the duality of the human smuggler
Jorgen Carling | Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)

Defining human smuggling in migration research: an appraisal and critique
Ted Baird | VU University Amsterdam

Humanitarian smuggling in a time of Crisis: examples from Europe
Ilse van Liempt | University of Utrecht

Is there a mutually reinforcing cycle between increased attention and power of state enforcement and the dynamic association of smuggling and/or trafficking?
Josiah Heyman and Sam Simon | University of Texas at El Paso

12.30-13.30 Lunch break

13.30-15.45 Session 2 - Smuggling as a form of service
Chair: Jorgen Carling | Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)

Smuggling as a social negotiation in transit spaces: pathways of Central American migrants in Mexico’s southern borders
Yaatsil Guevara | University of Bielefeld

What makes a good smuggler? Customer satisfaction among undocumented migrants
Daniel Martinez and Jeremy Slack | George Washington University and UTEP
Beyond common-sense notions about the smuggling of migrants: local findings from clandestine experiences from Ecuador to the US
Soledad Alvarez Velasco and Martha Ruiz | King’s College and FLACSO-Ecuador

Manufacturing smugglers: from irregular to clandestine mobility in the Sahara
Julien Brachet | IRD - Sorbonne University

Brokerage economies: crisis, mediation, and contested subjectivities across the Beitbridge border of South Africa and Zimbabwe
Xolani Tshabalala | Linkoping University

15.45-16.00 Coffee break
16.00-18.00 Session 3 - Enforcement
Chair: Josiah Heyman | University of Texas at El Paso

Recent evolutions in the organisation of crossings of the Mediterranean sea
Paola Monzini | Independent Scholar

The war on smuggling, at sea and in the public sphere
Maurizio Albahari | University of Notre Dame

Precarious waters: fishermen, people-smuggling and limited choice for earning money in Eastern Indonesia
Antje Missbach | Monash University

Mapping borderlands: drawing things together
Nora Akawi and Nina Kolowratnik with Jason Danforth | Columbia University

18.30 Drinks reception

6 APRIL
09.00-11.15 Session 4 - Solidarities, friendships, identity
Chair: Shahram Khosravi | University of Stockholm

The Struggle of Mobility: Organizing High-risk Migration from the Horn of Africa to Scandinavia
Tekalign Mengiste | University of Stockholm

Historical and community dimensions of smuggling in Afghanistan and Somalia
Nassim Majidi | Sciences Po

Friends and handlers: facilitating passage out of West Africa
Stephanie Maher | University of Washington

Indigenous migration merchants: Coyoterismo and indigenous mobility in Ecuador’s migration industry
Victoria Stone-Cadena | City University of New York
“This is Jihad”: piety and morality among Syrian smugglers
Luigi Achilli | Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute

11:15-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:30 Session 5 - Contradictions, challenges and incongruences: the multiple angles of the smuggling experience
Chair: Anna Triandafyllidou | Global Governance Programme, European University Institute

Smuggled or trafficked? North Korean refugees’ border mobility through smuggling networks
Kyunghhee Kook | University of Nottingham

Coyotaje and the construction of “el Camino” from Central America through Mexico
Noelle Bridgen | Marquette University

Rohingya by any other name: smuggling in Southeast Asia and the politics of terminology
Sarnata Reynolds | Refugee International

Crossing the border, blurring the boundaries: smuggling from the Horn of Africa
Milena Belloni | University of Trento

13:30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.30 Session 6 - Risk, security, protection and crime
Chair: Marie McAuliffe | Australian National University

Decency adrift at sea
Claudia Tazreiter | University of New South Wales

He used to be a pollero: smugglers and the securitisation of migration at the Mexico-Guatemala border
Rebecca Galemba | University of Denver

The Buddhist people smuggler: challenging contemporary stereotypes of exploitation and vulnerability through the Tibetan migration experience
Bodean Hedwards | Monash University

Casual encounters? Changing market conditions and organisational responses among smugglers of migrants and drugs
Gabriella Sanchez and Sheldon Zhang | UTEP and San Diego State University

16.30-16.45 Next steps

16.45-17.00 Closing remarks
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