



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



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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

Kyunghee 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

■ SPEAKERS

Luigi Achilli	Migration Policy Centre, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Nora Akawi	Columbia University
Maurizio Albahari	University of Notre Dame
Soledad Alvarez Velasco	King's College London FLACSO-Ecuador
Ted Baird	VU University Amsterdam
Milena Belloni	University of Trento
Julien Brachet	IRD - Sorbonne university
Noelle Bridgen	Marquette University
Jorgen Carling	Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)
Jason Danforth	Columbia University
Philippe Fargues	Migration Policy Centre, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Rebecca Galemba	University of Denver
Yaatsil Guevara	University of Bielefeld
Bodean Hedwards	Monash University
Josiah Heyman	University of Texas at El Paso
Shahram Khosravi	University of Stockhölml
Nina Kolowratnik	Columbia University
Kyunghee Kook	University of Nottingham
Stephanie Maher	University of Washington
Nassim Majidi	Sciences Po
Daniel Martinez	George Washington University UTEP
Marie McAuliffe	Australian National University
Tekalign Mengiste	University of Stockhölml
Antje Missbach	Monash University
Paola Monzini	Independent scholar
Ferruccio Pastore	International and European Forum on Migration Research
Sarnata Reynolds	Refugee International
Martha Ruiz	King's College London FLACSO-Ecuador
Gabriella Sanchez	National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas at El Paso
Sam Simon	University of Texas at El Paso
Jeremy Slack	George Washington University UTEP
Victoria Stone-Cadena	City University of New York
Claudia Tazreiter	University of New South Wales
Anna Triandafyllidou	Global Governance Programme, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Xolani Tshabalala	Linköping University
Ilse van Liempt	University of Utrecht
Sheldon Zhang	San Diego State University