

Migrating *in*, migrating *out*: how to (re)think “migrants” struggles

The goal of the workshop in Sofia is to bring critically together the phenomena of outward and inward migration and to question the sharp distinctions of what has been dubbed as ‘political’ and ‘economic’ migration by weaving them into one conceptual framework. Our starting position stems from the understanding that we need to engage critically with dichotomies such as inside/outside; political/economic migration, illegal/legal which have been comfortably settled in mainstream research but also in political movements. With this workshop we strive to venture beyond by visualizing a framework that better explains the multifarious resistance practices of “migrants” in late capitalism. To do this we bring together academics and activists from several European countries to discuss these issues as intertwined in the larger European political context. We will map knowledges and strategies that go beyond the inside/outside dichotomy and citizen/non-citizen divide in order to fortify our common political efforts.

Day 1 (May 8, 2014) *Beyond liberal distinctions*

13.00 – 14.00h Panel 1: “*Purgatory.eu: Inward migration through the external border of EU*”

The category of the “asylum seeker” and the “refugee” coming through an external border of the EU. The “border” as also found “inland:” detention and open camps. The panel aims to sketch how EU migration policies and local institutions construct the images of the refugee and the illegal immigrant and the limited options for resistance against the classifications and repressions.

Moderator: Tsvetelina Hristova

14:15 – 15:15h Panel 2: “*Sweatshop Europe: the EU migrant as an entrepreneurial victim*”

The panel will seek to unpack internal EU migration and the seemingly privileged status that EU citizens have by teasing out the contradictions and complexities inherent in this category. We aim to complicate the dichotomy citizen/non-citizen and to blur the sharp distinctions between regular and irregular status and work by involving in the analysis the predicaments and the struggles of labour migrants from the new member states into Western Europe. By doing this, we insist on bringing to the fore class relations as re/produced by EU inward migration.

Moderator: Neda Deneva

15:30 – 16:30h Panel 3: “*‘Economic’ or ‘Political’ Migration?*”

The panel will seek to engage with and against the established liberal categories of “political” and “economic” migrants and bring to the fore the commonality of struggles as weaved into similar class relations and hierarchies.

Moderator: Raia Apostolova

17.00 – 18.00 Discussion

18.30 – 20.00 *Keynote Lecture by Vicki Squire, University of Warwick.*

Day 2 (May 9, 2014) *Does Status Matter?*

The round tables will bring further the questions and concerns posed in the sessions from Day 1. The larger aim is to tackle differences in struggles that stem from European juridical order and that seemingly sharpen the established divide between categories such as “economic,” “political,” “illegal,” migrants; “asylum seekers” “refugees.” Nevertheless, recognizing these particularities we consider them strategic factors in the building of a “new politics” in the context of what can be called a European apartheid against migrants. The main challenge for us is to reconceptualize the role of the “anti-racist” movements and to build “new politics” that do not situate the “migrant” as a type of an exteriority to the larger developments and social unrests in Europe.

11.00 – 13.30 Round Table 1

Housing and Labor: The role of (neo-liberal) capitalism and liberal democracy.

Housing and labor are intertwined and often go hand in hand with processes of precarization. What are the main challenges that pertain to the struggles of the differentiated categories of “asylum-seekers,” “refugees,” “poverty migrants,” “economic migrants,” “illegals” in relation to housing and labor regimes? How do these issues differ for but also unite those who have been dubbed “migrants”?

14:30 – 16:00 Round Table 2

Education and Social Benefits: Education of Emancipatory Politics? Social Benefits or Defeat?

We are now being trained to believe that receiving social benefits is in fact abuse, enabled either by the principle of freedom of movement for EU workers or by the “generous”, nevertheless in dismay, national social security system(s). Alongside, education is continuously being dismantled to the privilege of the few and exemplifies structures that do function as differential inclusion for those with a “migrant” status.

16:30 – 17:30 Closing Remarks