

Memories, normative ideals and empathic solidarities in Europe in the aftermath of refugee arrivals in 2015–16



Humboldt University of Berlin, 19–20 October 2018

Exploring the politics of emotions that structure the discourses on migration seems most relevant following the countless pro- and anti-refugee movements since the rapid arrival of a large number of refugees in Europe in 2015 and 2016. Thereby the rise of far right nationalistic practices and politics is juxtaposed by the bottom-up movements that signify solidarity with refugees and bring ordinary people to volunteer for refugees in their respective neighbourhoods.

This workshop aims to gain a nuanced understanding of the **role of emotions, memories and normative ideals for generating a sense of solidarity with refugees** – whether mobilised through volunteering or as more general positive support. While cosmopolitan and humanitarian ideals might drive the practices of solidarity with refugees, this workshop also discusses how anti-refugee rhetoric and violence fuel the “emotional regimes” of anti-immigration discourses that expose the fragility of European political unity, not only amongst the European nations but also within them.

Involving a number of international scholars of different generations and with different disciplinary backgrounds, this workshop interrogates the importance and contingency of local and national contexts to refugee acceptance and tolerance, especially in relation to histories, cultures of memory and psycho-social politics of identity.

To create an interactive and productive platform for the exchange of initial research results this workshop will combine two formats: a conventional conference format with invited lecturers from Germany, Sweden, Poland, Croatia, Hungary and other places, as well as a collaborative format based on the *Open Space* Debate methodology. For the latter, both young and experienced researchers, together with activists and civil society groups, are invited to initiate collaboration on the questions of memory politics, emotions, and normative regimes in the fields of migration and refugee activism studies and discuss current conceptual, political and methodological challenges of such research.

Open Space

This workshop is a politically timely and academically urgent endeavour that concerns many of us within the interdisciplinary fields of migration and refugee activism studies. The **Open Space Platform** is aimed in particular at younger researchers, from students to doctoral candidates and postdocs, as it provides the opportunity for presenting ideas, discussing and networking in an open framework.

Together we create a space by voicing our matters of (research) concern and define a collaborative agenda on the spot. The **overall theme** holds all relevant issues around the discourse on migration, refugee activism, normative regimes or politics of emotion and memory and will thereby structure the spontaneous emergence of the open space process.

All those who want to contribute concrete topics are invited to share their suggestions in form of a short oral input or a poster session in the opening round of the Open Space Debate. Based on the topics introduced by the participants, a structured marketplace of questions, topics, discussion offers and project ideas will be developed, which will be dealt with intensively in small working groups. The final plenary session will bring all processes back to the common space.

Possible inputs and questions may relate to:

- methodological challenges
- ethics of the researchers
- political dimensions
- further research questions and future collaborations

Welcome to an open space of structured flow, creative productivity and collaborative innovation!

Date and Venue

Humboldt University of Berlin, 19–20 October 2018

The workshop will take place in Humboldt University's main building, Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin. The workshop rooms 2070A and 2249a will be signposted from the entrance hall. All rooms are wheelchair accessible and can be reached using the elevator (call buttons 1 for room 2070A and Z1 for room 2249a).

Registration

Participation is free of charge, but registration is required and open until **5 October 2018**. To register, please send an email to Stefan Lindemann, lindemsz@hu-berlin.de, specifying whether you would like to attend the workshop's speaker sessions and/or the Open Space Debate.

<https://hu.berlin/kosmos-workshop>

