



Democratizing Displacement

Refugee Studies Centre 2019 Conference

18 - 19 March 2019

New College, University of Oxford

CALL FOR PAPERS

Pushed from their homes, refugees and displaced people typically find themselves subject to a range of policies, practices and powers over which they have no say. The lives of refugees are intimately and dramatically shaped by actors – states, international organisations, humanitarian NGOs, local host communities amongst others – who make decisions that affect their well-being but are rarely accountable to their interests and goals. How might refugees become more effective political actors in shaping the forces and institutions that govern their own lives?

Rationale

The Refugee Studies Centre's 2019 Conference aims to consider the issue of 'democratizing' refugee protection from a variety of disciplinary angles, including ethics, politics, anthropology, history and law. It proposes to examine the role of refugees as political agents able to inform the decisions that affect them at local, state, regional and global levels. The Conference will explore the ethics and politics of accountability, participation, and humanitarian governance; the character of practical, institutional and legal mechanisms to ensure that refugees have a say in their protection; and ways in which those who make decisions in relation to the displaced are (or could be) held accountable for their actions.



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Topics

We are interested in receiving academic paper proposals from scholars in the social sciences and the humanities in the following broad areas.

- Historical, contemporary and theoretical analysis of:
 - displaced people as political agents in democratic and non-democratic political systems for different ends and goals;
 - displaced people as actors engaging in resistance and political protest.
- Examination and critical analysis of the legal and institutional mechanisms to ensure accountability of those whose actions affect refugees, and their linkage with participatory processes.
- The exploration of future pathways – in terms of normative ideals, legal constructions, or institutional designs – that increase the political agency of refugees and other displaced people.

Location

The conference will take place at **New College, Holywell Street, Oxford, OX1 3BN.**

Proposal submission

Paper proposals should consist of a title and a 500–700 word abstract that specifies the research question, describes the approach used, and gives an indication of the conclusions. Abstracts will be reviewed for suitability in terms of the conference themes. It is hoped that some of the papers will form part of a special edition of the *Journal of Refugee Studies*. The conference will be limited to 70 participants.

To submit a proposal, please visit our website www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/democratizing-displacement and complete the online form. The deadline for paper submissions is Friday 7 December 2018.

For further information about the conference, please contact Susanna Power at rsc-conference@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Photos: Refugees voting for new representatives, Lóvua Resettlement Centre, Angola. Credit: © UNHCR/Omotola Akindipe. Röszke makeshift refugee camp from the Hungarian side of the Serbia-Hungary border, 2016. © UNHCR/Zsolt Balla. Refugees at the Greece-Macedonia border plead for the border to reopen to the thousands stranded there due to border closings, 2015. Credit: Steve Evans (CC BY-NC 2.0).



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