

Disrupted

The Migration Issue

*The
Winter
2019
Issue*



A big thanks.

Editor-in-Chief

Katie Washington

Design

Marissa Conway

Editors

Jennifer Brough / Charlie Gorham / Carina Minami / Marianne Roaldi / Louise Scarce

Article Contributions

Najwa Abukhater / Dr. Christine Agius / Nafeesah Allen / Dr. Sally Clark / Dr. Natalie Hudson / Aleksandra Kusnierkiewicz / Laurie Lijnders / Mary McLoughlin / Dr. Anwar Mhajne / Maxine Mueller / Rachel Popik / John Trajer

Art Contributions

Julie Audouard / Carmela Caldart / Christina Claes / Susanne Greven / Taylor Miller / Opeyemi Owa / Gabrielle Rocha Rios / Patricia Santos / Vidushi Yadav / Elvia Vasconcelos / Gloria Sophie Wille

Poetry Contributions

Idreas Khandy / Robin Ladwig / Alice Merry / Byul Ryan-Im

Cover Art

Gloria Sophie Wille / Amphitrite: It's all white, Ma (I'm only bleeding)

The name of the dress "Amphitrite" derives from the Greek Goddess of the Sea as well as the oldest sea going yacht, now under UK and German flag, with the same name. The subtitle „It's all white, Ma (I'm only bleeding)“ is an allusion to the Bob Dylan song „It's alright, Ma (I'm only bleeding)“. Through distorting the title of the song by onomatopoeically mocking the German accent, it is diving into the effect of „whiteness“ in the foreign policy of Germany and the EU. The orange triangle/flag in the background is a tribute to the rescue ship „Aquarius 2“, chartered by the private NGOs SOS Méditerranée and Doctors Without Borders. The knitted dress „Amphitrite – It's all white, Ma (I'm only bleeding)“ is a satirical almost cynical view on Europe's foreign policy, especially regarding the distress rescue on the Mediterranean Sea. It is a hand knit/crochet piece with over 1.500 hand embroidered pearls and beads – each one representing a human being who died in the Mediterranean Sea, seeking refuge in the EU during the summer of 2018.

The project itself drew from the feeling of powerlessness facing the foreign policy of the EU and the hope for change through the upcoming elections in 2019. Parts of it were also the feeling of numbness towards the screaming voices of hatred on Social Media this summer and the question to myself: Is human empathy a dying tree and my longing for global female solidarity just a drop in the ocean?

About us.

**Become a
CFFP
Member &
get instant
access to
each
Disrupted
issue.**

Originally founded in the UK in 2016, CFFP is a research and advocacy organisation dedicated to making foreign policy more transparent, more democratic, and more feminist.

our story

Originally founded in the UK in 2016, The Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP) is a research and advocacy organisation dedicated to making foreign policy more transparent, more democratic, and more feminist.

Disrupted is biannual print journal published by CFFP UK which aims to provide a space for disruptive feminist conversations around a wide variety of themes under the foreign policy umbrella. We value both emerging and established voices and use a variety of mediums to shake up the foreign policy status quo.

our mission & vision

Our mission is to promote a people centred foreign policy. And our vision? To see a intersectional feminist framework adopted in foreign policy, globally.

LGBTQ Refugees from Syria: A Catch 22

by Dr. Anwar Mhajne

Since the start of the Syrian conflict in 2011, nearly 13 million Syrians have been displaced, most of whom are currently in Turkey (3.4 million) and Lebanon (1 million) (Connor 2018). Academics and the media alike have extensively covered the Syrian refugee 'crisis'. However, this coverage has failed to sufficiently include Syrian lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex (LGBTI) issues and needs. Moreover, existing EU and host countries' policies towards refugees do not take into account the distinctive position of LGBTQI refugees who are prone to discrimination from multiple sides of the conflict, and within their own group due to their identity. An inclusive feminist foreign policy approach to refugee crises should pay sufficient attention and be sensitive to the needs of marginalised groups such as LGBTQI individuals. Foreign policy addressing the refugee question that does not consider and acknowledge the unique situation of LGBTQI people could exacerbate their marginalisation after they leave the conflict zone.

In addition to the many challenges faced by all Syrian refugees, LGBTQI individuals also face targeted discrimination and violence due to their sexual orientation, which creates barriers to seeking help and threats to their safety. In Syria, the Islamic State (ISIS) targeted LGBTQI individuals for public executions. Moreover, they were victims of punitive military recruitment procedures enacted by the Syrian government. Confronting oppression from multiple sides of the civil war, many LGBTQI persons escape Syria to find refuge in other countries such as Turkey and Lebanon. This discrimination follows them to their host countries where they continue to face the threat of rejection and violence from other community members as well as family members. In host countries, LGBTQI refugees face significant hardship and discrimination in accessing essential services, education, employment, housing, social assistance, and health care. Consequently, this discrimination forces LGBTQI persons to become reliant on sex work as a survival strategy or to get married early to hide their sexual identity (Freedman et al, 2017).

To survive in this discriminatory environment, these individuals need to hide their sexual orientation. Paradoxically, their access to international protection and UNHCR's resettlement program to third countries is contingent on their 'coming out' as lesbian, gay, trans, or bisexual. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) gives priority to Syrian LGBTQI refugees and puts them on the fast track for resettlement. However, this paradox results in difficulties providing aid and assistance to LGBTI refugee individuals. The number of LGBTQI Syrian refugees is unknown because a large number of them abstain from registration to protect themselves from rejection by their own families and other members of the refugee community in host countries. Additionally, publicly identifying as an LGBTQI individual may make it harder for these refugees to go back home after the conflict is over. Some LGBTQI refugees avoid contacting LGBTQI organisations or NGOs for assistance due to their fear of having this information revealed to their family and community members as well as their employers and extremist groups.

The restricted resettlement quotas of LGBTQI individuals in participating states in the UNHCR Syrian refugees' resettlement and humanitarian admission program hinders the resettlement process of this group as it limits Syrian LGBTQI access to international protection. Another problem in the resettlement efforts of LGBTI individuals is the shortage of accessible information to the public about applying to the resettlement program. Rather than disseminating the information via formal mediums of communication, LGBTQI Syrians in host countries such as Turkey and Lebanon are informed about their "vulnerable" refugee status, which qualifies them to be considered for resettlement in third countries, via informal networks of friends or UNHCR local implementation partners.

Another issue hindering the registration and resettlement of LGBTQI individuals has been the constant movement of refugees in these countries towards Europe. This movement made it difficult to reach LGBTQI Syrian refugees and send them for interviews at the resettlement commission. Moreover, the lengthy resettlement process, which takes roughly two years to conclude, makes it less appealing for some LGBTQI individuals to go with the UNHCR's resettlement procedure. Instead, a number of these refugees end up hiring smugglers to help them cross to Europe. However, smugglers became a less favourable option for Syrian refugees in 2016 when an agreement between the EU and Turkey was implemented in March of the same year regulating the influx of refugees from Turkey to European territories.

The EU-Turkey agreement declares migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek Islands will be returned to Turkey (Freedman et al, 2017). Additionally, according to the agreement, Turkey committed to crack

down on unregulated migration to the EU through its territories (Freedman et al. 2017). As a result, the number of migrants arriving on the Greek islands in April 2016 dropped by 90 percent in comparison to the previous month (Frontex, 2016). Accordingly, the number of LGBTQI Syrian refugees hiring smugglers to go to Europe has fundamentally plummeted. This made UNHCR resettlement program the only avenue for LGBTQI Syrian refugees to seek assistance in Turkey. The *drastic changes* in the legal framework regulating refugee entry to host countries adds to the insecurities of LGBTQI Syrian refugees because it makes the work of resettlement agencies harder as these agencies must not only adapt to these changes, but also inform the communities they work with of these changes (Freedman et al. 2017). It makes it harder for marginalised refugee groups such as LGBTQI individuals to access information on the new rules and procedures.

LGBTQI individuals who were marginalised in their home countries during times of peace become extremely vulnerable for social and economic exploitation as well as sexual and gender-based violence during times of conflict. Their marginalisation begins in their home countries and travels with the ones who were able to escape the conflict to their host countries. The already difficult war and displacement experiences become even more difficult for LGBTQI persons because these experiences are accompanied by the need to conceal one's sexual orientation and gender identity. Any comprehensive feminist foreign policy approach for addressing and responding to the issues of refugees and their resettlement process requires a deeper understanding of the unique 'vulnerabilities' of all refugee groups including LGBTQI individuals.

References

Connor, P., 2018. *Where Syrian Refugees Have Resettled Worldwide*. [pdf]. Pew Research Centre. Available at: <<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/29/where-displaced-syrians-have-resettled/>>. [Accessed 2 Dec 2018].

Freedman, J., Kivilcim, Z., and Ozgur Baklacioğlu, N., eds. 2017. *A gendered approach to the Syrian refugee crisis*. Oxon: Taylor & Francis

Frontex, 2016. 'Number of Migrants Arriving in Greece Dropped 90% in April'. 13 May 2016. [online]. Available at: <<https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/number-of-migrants-arriving-in-greece-dropped-90-in-april-6e7oBw>> . [Accessed 2 Dec 2018].