2nd International Kurdish Migration Conference

Globalisation, Diaspora and Transnational Belonging

June 15-16, 2017, Middlesex University, London, UK

Middlesex University, Hendon Campus,
College Building, The Boardroom C219-C220,
The Burroughs, London, NW4 4BT, UK

Convenors

Dr. Janroj Yilmaz Keles and Dr. Alessio D’Angelo

Photo: Syrian-Kurdish Refugee camp in Erbil, Kurdistan, Iraq 2017, by Janroj Yilmaz Keles

This conference is organised by the Business School and the Social Policy Research Centre at Middlesex University with support from The British Institute for the Study of Iraq
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Conference Aims and Objectives

Following the success of the first international Kurdish migration conference (IKMC) held in 2016 at Middlesex University (London) and the strong interest and participation by the international scholarly community, the 2nd IKMC will be held at Middlesex University on 15 and 16 June 2017.

Displacement and forced migration have a distinct meaning and significance in the history of the Middle East. In recent years, the political and economic instability of the area, together with the repressive and coercive policies of most regional states and their international allies, the marginalisation of minority groups and the rise of fundamentalist movements, continue causing permanent crises, fuelling displacements and forced migrations. Millions of people have lost their homes and livelihood and were forced to seek a haven either in the neighbouring countries or taking a long and dangerous journey to Europe. The images of drowned three-year-old Kurdish boy Alan Kurdi in the Aegean Sea, mass killing of Yazidis and Syrian nationals, displacements of religious and ethnic minorities made global headlines without any effect.

Similarly to its neighbouring countries, today the Kurdistan Region in Iraq hosts some 1.8 million refugees from Syria and internally displaced persons. A considerable number of refugees and displaced people are also hosted by the Kurdish Cantons in Rojava (Kurdish region in Syria) and by municipalities in the Kurdish Region of Turkey.

Far away from the homeland, the over 2 million Kurds living in Europe, the USA, Canada, Former Soviet republics and other countries are following with great concern the events in the Middle East. Since the 1980s, the Kurdish diaspora in the Western has played an important role, recreating new Kurdish diasporic spaces in settlement countries while simultaneously reconnecting to their home country and making the question of Kurdistan a transnational political issue through their political engagement, media and cultural production and activism. However, what is the relationship of the Kurdish diaspora with the contemporary challenges and conflicts in and around Kurdistan? What kind of exchanges and interactions are taking place? How do Kurds relate with new refugees and displaced people living in Kurdistan, the Middle East and Europe? Moreover, what are the experiences of the Kurdish diaspora in countries where hostility and discrimination towards immigrants are alarmingly on the rise?

The 2nd International Kurdish Migration Conference 2017 aims to bring together researchers from a range of disciplines working on Kurdish migration to discuss these and other relevant questions and to exchange their views and findings about all aspects of migration from, through and into Kurdistan, as well as about the experiences of diasporic communities and second generations abroad.
Conference Programme

Thursday, 15 June 2017

8:30 - 9:30 - Registration/ Coffee – 2nd Floor Mezzanine

9:30 - 10:00 – Welcome and introduction (Room C219-20)
Prof. Eleonore Kofman, Co-Director, Social Policy Research Centre
Prof. Stephen Syrett, Director of Research, Business School
Dr. Janroj Yilmaz Keles and Dr. Alessio D’Angelo, Conference convenors

10:00 - 10:45 – Plenary session (Room C219-20)

Keynote lecture: Identity, Conflict and Flight: readdressing the territorial dimension of statehood in the ‘Middle East’ through international Law
Professor Joshua Castellino, Middlesex University, London, UK

10:45 - 11:00 - Refugees and IDPs in Kurdistan- Iraq (Room C219-20)
H.E. Karwan Jamal Tahir, Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK

11:00 - 12:30 - Parallel sessions

Room C204 - Migration, Gender and identities
Panel chair: Houzan Mahmoud, organiser of the panel, Cultural Project
- “Is It OK?” Challenging Gender Roles Online
  Jowan Mahmoud, Independent scholar, Sweden
- Queer Imagination of Kurdistan: Diaspora, Gender Identity and Belonging
  Hakan Sandal, St Catharine's College University of Cambridge, UK
- Kurdish Women Narratives after Forced Village Evacuations:
The Case of Kucukcekmece Kanarya Neighbourhood, 2014
  Melike Gul Demir, Maltepe University, Turkey

Room C209 - Kurdish Refugees from Rojava/Syria
Panel chair: Brad Blitz, Middlesex University, UK
- Syrian Stateless Kurds: Vulnerabilities in Displacement
  Thomas McGee, Independent Researcher, Kurdistan
- The Syrian Kurds: A Diaspora within a Diaspora
  Anne Sofie Schott, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- “Labour Market Situation for Syrian Refugees in Iraq”
  Aram Mahmood, Iraq-Impact, Kurdistan [SKYPE]
12:30 - 13:30 - Lunch Break – 2nd Floor Mezzanine

13:30 - 15:00 – Parallel sessions

**Room C204 – Citizenship and transnational identities**

Panel chair: Eleonore Kofman, Middlesex University, UK

- Digital diaspora and social capital
  *Janroj Keles, Middlesex University, UK*
- Do emigrants self-select along cultural traits? Evidence from the MENA countries
  *Riccardo Turati, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium*
- The Yezidi Diaspora in Arizona, Islamophobia, and Transnational Belonging
  *Mija Sanders, University of Arizona, USA*
- Citizenship, Migration and Gender: Kurdish women in the U.S.
  *Ghomri Rostampour, Harvard University, USA*

**Room C209 - Diaspora and belonging**

Panel chair: Alessio D’Angelo, Middlesex University, UK

- Exploring identities among the second-generation Kurdish diaspora in the UK
  *Shayan Moftizadeh, UCL, UK*
- The worry of being misunderstood: Caucasian Diaspora, identity construction and the shadow of the Kurdish issue
  *Veysel Erdemli, University of Birmingham, UK*
- Resilience in the face of uncertainty: exploring social identity as a protective factor in refugee adolescents.
  *Shilan Keskin, University College London, UK*
- Researching Kurdish Diasporic Communities: Theoretical and Methodological Considerations
  *Ali Zalme, University of the West of England, UK*

15:00 – 15:30 Break – 2nd Floor Mezzanine

15:30 – 17:00 – Parallel sessions

**Room C204 - Return Migration and the Labour Market**

Panel chair: Janroj Keles, Middlesex University, UK

- Realities and Challenges of Return Migration to Iraqi Kurdistan: Diasporic Experience, Motivations for Return, Transnational Ties and Re-embracing “Home”
  *Bahar Baser, Coventry University, UK*
  *Mari Toivanen, Stellenbosch University, University of Turku/ EHESS, Finland*
- The Effect of Reintegration Assistance on Sustainable Return Migration in the Context of Kurdistan Region of Iraq
  *Wria Rashid, IOM, Kurdistan*
• Turning back: Policy and data analysis of Iraqis moving back from Europe
  Alex Odlum, Information Analyst (Mixed Migration Platform) [SKYPE]

Room C209 – Conflict and Displacement
Panel chair: Edel Hughes, Middlesex University, UK
• Demographic displacement in the 21st century: TOKI and urban renewal projects from
  the 2011 Van earthquake to urban warfare in 20157
  Peter Klempner, Independent scholar, Turkey
• Border as zone of indistinction: “Forced Migration and Urban Destruction in Kurdish Cities
  along Turkey Border with Syria
  Ezgi Tuncer Gurkas, Kadir Has University, UK
• Geopolitics of Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Turkish Grand Strategy in the Middle East
  Tunc Aybeck, Middlesex University, UK
• Iraqi Yazidis in Iraq: Motivations to emigrate to Europe
  Karel Černý, Charles University, Czech Republic

Room C219-20 and 2nd Floor Mezzanine -17:00 - 17:30
Book launch
From Imagined Community to Managing Communities
Jowan Mahmod
Friday, 16 June 2017

10:00 – 11:00 - Plenary session (Room C219-20)
Keynote lecture: The Future of the Kurdish Diaspora
Dr Östen Wahlbeck, University of Helsinki, Finland

11:00 – 12:30 - Parallel sessions

Room C207- Diaspora, politics and Transnational Networks
Panel chair: Mehmet Ali Dikerdem, Middlesex University, UK
  • Explaining the Role of Diasporas and Transnational Networks in Peace Settlements
    Sinem Arslan, University of Essex, UK
  • Kurdish Diaspora Politics in Germany and Canada
    Pia Morar, London School of Economics, UK
  • Politics of Kurdistan Migration
    Diyako Rahmani, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
  • Kurds’ External Voting Experience for Turkey: The Case of Germany
    Inci Oyku Yener-Roderburg, University of Strasbourg, University of Duisburg-Essen

Room C205 – Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Migration
Panel chair: Zeynep Arslan (organiser of the panel), University of Vienna, Austria
  • Identity Construction in Diaspora: The case for the Zazaki-speakers
    Zeynep Arslan, University of Vienna, Austria
  • Migration waves from Dersim to Europe
    Huseyin Celik, University of Zurich, Switzerland
  • Kurmancki, Zazaki and the remembrance of Tertele:
    The language as a key and catalyzer for memory processes
    Maria Six-Hohenbalken, University of Vienna & Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

12:30 – 13:30 – Lunch Break – 2nd Floor Mezzanine

13:30 – 15:00 - Parallel session

Room C207- Kurdish Studies at British Universities
Panel chair: Naif Bezwan, LSE, UK
  • Hegemony and the Logics of Kurdish Conflict in Turkey
    Recep Onursal, University of Kent, UK
  • Partition as a Solution to Ethnic Conflict in Iraq
    Yousif Mustafa Sindi, Leeds Beckett University, UK
  • Mesopotamia: Formulation of the sustainability of its natural resources
    Muhamad Tawfiq Ali, MCIL, UK
Room C205 – Migration culture and visual representations
Panel chair: Magali Peyrefitte, Middlesex University, UK
- Kurdish Literary works in the West: its social and political expressions
  Shilan Fuad Hussain Hussain, Independent researcher, Italy
- The vulnerable heritage of displaced religious minorities in Iraq
  Richard Wilding, Photographer and Creative Director of Gulan, UK
- Bridge to Kobane: Bridging future horizons in Kurdistan
  Lana Askari, University of Manchester, UK

15:00 – 16:00 – Parallel sessions

Room C207 – Gendered and political struggle in Kurdistan
Panel chair: Dave Hill, Middlesex University, UK
- Gender and multilayered citizenship:
  Kurdish women’s politics and agency in Turkey/ North Kurdistan
  Umut Erel, Open University and Necla Acik, University of Manchester, UK
- Female Fighters Within National Movements
  Mustafa Kemal Topal, Roskilde University, Denmark

Room C205 – Forced migration, trauma and mental health
Panel chair: Rachel Seoighe, Middlesex University, UK
- Dersim Massacre (1937-38) and Native Languages of Dersim: Implications of the Loss of the Native Language as an Effect of Intergenerational Trauma
  Filiz Celik Swansea University, UK
- Understanding mental health Issues: Based on Life Story Approach among Kurdish Refugees in Finland
  Afrouz Zibaei, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

16:00 – 17:00 – Tea/ reception – 2nd Floor Mezzanine